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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK



SEAN HURT/ODD

Retired U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins, a Medal of Honor recipient, died Friday from complications from the coronavirus. Adkins was 86.

Nations feel pressure for solutions

Lockdowns have plunged world into most painful economic slump since Great Depression

By FRANK JORDANS
AND HYUNG-JIN KIM
Associated Press

BERLIN — Authorities responded with a range of possible dates and solutions — and a few emphatic “not yet” — Sunday as pressure mounted on governments around the world to ease the economic pain of coronavirus lockdowns.

Shutdowns that began in China in late January and spread to Europe, the United States and elsewhere have disrupted economic, social, cultural and religious life across the globe and plunged the world into its most painful economic slump since the Great Depression

GLOBAL CONTRACTION

The International Monetary Fund expects the global economy to contract 3% this year — a far bigger loss than 2009's 0.1% after the global financial crisis.

SOURCE: Associated Press

of the 1930s. Tens of millions of workers have lost their jobs; millions more fear that they are next.

With the arc of infection different in every nation, proposals have differed for coping with the virus that has killed more than

160,000 lives over the past four months and for which there is still no vaccine. Countries such as Britain say it's too soon to give definite lockdown easing dates.

But in Germany, which has managed to significantly slow the rate of new infections since mid-March, most small stores can reopen Monday. The head of an association representing German cities said many people would likely welcome the chance to shop in person again.

“But we're not expecting a huge rush now,” Helmut Dedy told Germany's dpa news agency. “The stores that are reopening will be just

SEE PRESSURE ON PAGE 7

Virus claims celebrated veteran's life

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Bennie Adkins, who received the Medal of Honor for fighting off enemies and saving wounded comrades in Vietnam, died Friday from complications from the coronavirus.

Adkins, who was 86, was hospitalized March 26 at the East Alabama Medical Center in his hometown of Opelika, Ala. He was admitted to the intensive care unit and put on a ventilator after experiencing respiratory failure. He died Friday according to a message posted to his foundation's Facebook page.

Adkins is credited with killing 135 to 175 Vietnamese in a nearly four-day battle while being wounded 18 times and helping fellow soldiers to safety. For those acts, former President Barack Obama presented Adkins with the Medal of Honor in 2014.

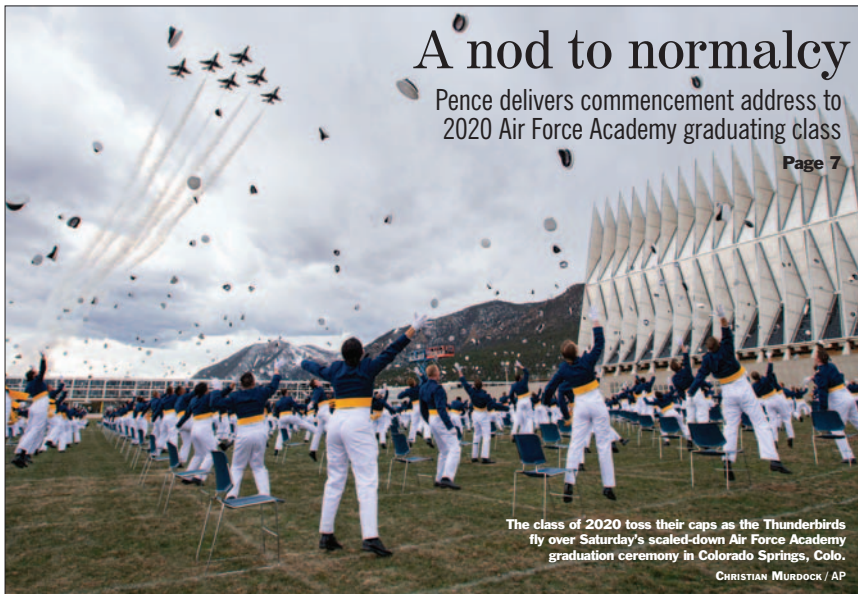
“I have to be honest, in a battle and daring escape that lasted four days, Bennie performed so many acts of bravery we actually

SEE LIFE ON PAGE 6

A nod to normalcy

Pence delivers commencement address to 2020 Air Force Academy graduating class

Page 7



The class of 2020 toss their caps as the Thunderbirds fly over Saturday's scaled-down Air Force Academy graduation ceremony in Colorado Springs, Colo.

CHRISTIAN MURDOCK / AP

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Contactless payments skyrocket in place of cash

By OLGA KHARIF
Bloomberg

Use of contactless mobile payments — services that once struggled to catch on in the U.S. — is surging as people come to see their phones as a safer way to pay. They're also using mobile apps tied to payments, such as Amazon Prime Now, to place delivery or pickup orders for groceries. The Treasury Department may even let people who don't have bank accounts receive their coronavi-

rus relief checks via mobile-payment services like Venmo. "We shouldn't be touching anything," said Richard Crone, chief executive officer of mobile payment research firm Crone Consulting. He expects contactless payments to grab an additional 10% to 20% of transactions at stores and ATMs as a result of the pandemic. Person-to-person services like PayPal, Venmo and Zelle should benefit as well, Crone said. Twenty-seven percent of U.S.

small businesses have already seen an increase in customers using services like Apple Pay, according to a survey of 361 companies released in April by the Strawhecker Group and the Electronic Transactions Association. Public Super Markets sped up its transition to contactless terminals because of COVID-19, according to the company. Since early April, consumers at all Publix stores have been able to use services like Apple Pay and Google Pay to check out.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (April 20).....	\$1.06
Dollar buys (April 20).....	€0.9965
British pound (April 20).....	\$1.22
Japanese yen (April 20).....	¥105.00
South Korean won (April 20).....	₩1,187.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar).....	0.3778
British pound.....	\$1.2506
Canada (Dollar).....	1.4027
China (Yuan).....	7.0724
Denmark (Krone).....	5.6426
Egypt (Pound).....	6.8524
Hong Kong (Dollar).....	\$1.0886/0.9186
Hungary (Forint).....	7.7505
Israel (Shekel).....	3.5892
Japan (Yen).....	107.33
Kuwait (Dinar).....	0.3119
Norway (Krone).....	10.3228
Philippines (Peso).....	50.92
Poland (Zloty).....	4.16
Saudi Arabia (Riyal).....	3.7574
Singapore (Dollar).....	1.4218
South Korea (Won).....	1,216.57

Switzerland (Franc).....	0.9662
Thailand (Baht).....	32.50
Turkey (Lira).....	6.9271

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

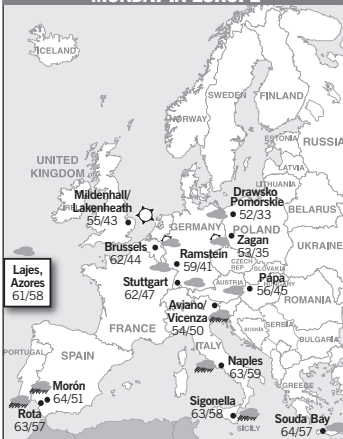
Prime rate.....	3.25
Discount rate.....	0.25
Federal funds market rate.....	0.05
3-month bill.....	0.12
30-year bond.....	1.28

WEATHER OUTLOOK

MONDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



MONDAY IN EUROPE



TUESDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY

General apologizes for firefighting foam leak

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Marine general apologized Friday to a vice-governor of Okinawa for an April 10 spill of 38,000 gallons of potentially toxic firefighting foam from an air station into a nearby stream and neighborhood.

The leak occurred after something triggered a fire-suppression system inside a hangar at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and the foam traveled off base through a storm drain, the Marines said in a statement Friday.

Okinawa Vice-Governor Kiichiro Jahana toured the scene of the spill at MCAS Futenma on Friday and was briefed by Marines on what had occurred, the cleanup response and efforts to prevent future spills, according to a Marine statement.

Jahana also discussed the incident with U.S. deputy consul general Hillary Daurer and Brig. Gen. William Bowers, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Installations Pacific, according to the statement.

Jahana's visit started with an apology from Bowers.

"We apologize that this incident has caused trouble for local residents," the general said, according to the statement. "A senior Marine colonel is conducting a thorough investigation to determine the cause of the spill. When the investigation concludes and based upon the recommendations in the final report, we will implement measures to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents in the future."



CALEB HOOVER/U.S. Marine Corps

Locals tour an Osprey hangar at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Okinawa, in 2013. On April 10, 38,000 gallons of potentially toxic firefighting foam spilled at Futenma.

Of the approximately 60,000 gallons spilled, 22,000 gallons were contained on the base, an Okinawa Defense Bureau spokesman said Wednesday. The bureau represents Japan's Ministry of Defense on the island.

Defense Ministry spokesman Shigeki Ito on Tuesday called it a "mass-leakage incident."

"If the U.S. grants base access, we will send an investigation team to find out the cause [of the spill] then go from there," another defense spokesman said Wednesday.

Defense Minister Taro Kono on Tuesday told reporters: "We may ask the U.S. to pay

for the damage later."

U.S. military officials in Japan have said the firefighting foam used at Futenma contains perfluorooctanesulfonic acid, or PFOS, and perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA.

The synthetic, fully fluorinated organic acids are also found in aircraft grease, water-repellant materials, cleaning agents and other products. They have been known to cause tumors, increases in body and organ weight and death in animals.

An unknown quantity of the foam reached Uchidomari River near MCAS Futenma, according to a letter sent Tuesday by Ginowan city Mayor Masanori Matsukawa to

the commander of III Marine Expeditionary Force. Uchidomari is not a source of drinking water for the city.

"It's a huge problem because if the leak had happened within our water supply river, we would have had to close the intake and cut the water supply to our people," a spokesman for the Okinawa Prefectural Enterprise Bureau, which oversees water quality, said Wednesday. It's customary for some government officials in Japan to speak on condition of anonymity.

Ginowan city firefighters responded to the Kakazu neighborhood where they saw large amounts of foam floating on Uchidomari River, a department spokesman said Friday. The foam was picked up by a strong easterly wind and covered "everything," including homes.

The firefighters turned the foam over to the base so it could be discarded, the defense bureau spokesman said.

Bureau personnel were also dispatched to a day care center in Ginowan's Ojima neighborhood to clean playground equipment and block off a sandbox that had been contaminated.

Ginowan's mayor said in his letter he was angered that the Marines did not perform the off-base cleanup.

Kono, the nation's defense minister, said he, too, wished they had taken "necessary" action and called for discussions on the future use of firefighting foam containing the compounds.

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Stars and Stripes

People shop at the Kaiserslautern Military Community Center's base exchange at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Due to the pandemic, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service is extending its return policy for shoppers through July 1.

AAFES extending its return policy

Stars and Stripes

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is extending its return policy for items purchased in AAFES stores to accommodate customers during the coronavirus pandemic, the agency announced last week.

All purchases made since March 16 of this year are eligible for returns through July 1. The

previous return policy was 90 days, except for certain products, such as jewelry, televisions and computers, which had a return policy of 15 or 30 days, depending on the item.

"While extensive preventive measures have been implemented at our stores to keep the military community safe, we understand that some shoppers may not feel comfortable going to a public

place at this time," said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Luis Reyes, the Exchange senior enlisted advisor, in a statement. "Extending the return window gives military shoppers peace of mind."

The extended return policy applies to items purchased at Exchange stores and not those purchased online, AAFES officials said.

news@stripes.com

COLA changes boost some troops' paychecks

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

Some service members in Japan saw a welcome surprise in their paychecks Wednesday after the cost-of-living allowance increased across the region, a U.S. Forces Japan official said during a livestreamed town hall Thursday.

Service members at Camp Zama, Misawa Air Base, Yokota Air Base and Camp Fuji will receive about \$4.50 more per day, an increase of 4 percentage points, USFJ's senior enlisted leader Chief Master Sgt. Rick Winegartner said via USFJ's official Facebook page. That's about \$67.50 more per 15-day pay period.

Personnel stationed at Yokosuka Naval Base, Sasebo Naval Base or installations in Yokohama or on Okinawa received a boost of about \$2.25 per day, Winegartner said in the livestream town hall hosted by American Forces Network Pacific radio. That's about \$33.75 more per paycheck.

Cost-of-living allowance rates reflect how expensive it is to live in an area as compared to the United States. The Defense Department uses a percentage point system to adjust the rate, so an increase of four points means the area's cost of living is an additional 4% higher than it would be back home.

The increase follows a decrease

in cost-of-living allowances in November at many installations in Japan. Camp Zama saw a reduction of eight points; Misawa lost six points; Atsugi, Iwakuni, Sasebo and Yokota lost four points, and Okinawa lost two, according to a Defense Travel Agency statement on Nov. 19.

Winegartner said he was glad to share positive news during the livestream, which was otherwise punctuated with questions from the public about the coronavirus. He and other U.S. military officials across Japan have been participating in regular virtual town halls and video statements regarding coronavirus-related policy changes during the pandemic.

"Some good news — it has nothing to do with COVID — I just wanted to be able to share that so everybody can go, 'Hey, good news comes out of these conversations, as well,'" Winegartner said in the livestream, referring to the name of the disease caused by coronavirus.

He did not mention whether COLA changed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni or Naval Air Station Atsugi.

USFJ did not immediately respond Friday to a request for further information about the changes or whether other installations in Japan qualified for an increase.

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MILITARY/VIRUS OUTBREAK

Iran's Guard acknowledges US encounter

By AMIR VAHDAT
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard acknowledged Sunday it had a tense encounter with U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf last week but alleged without offering evidence that American forces sparked the incident.

The incident Wednesday saw the U.S. Navy release video of small Iranian fast boats coming close to American warships as they operated in the northern Persian Gulf near Kuwait, with U.S. Army Apache helicopters.

In the Guard's telling, its forces were on a drill and faced "the unprofessional and provocative actions of the United States and their indifference to warnings." It said

the Americans later withdrew.

The Guard released no video or evidence to support its allegation. It also accused American forces of blocking Iranian warships on April 6 and April 7.

Lt. Pete Pagano, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet, said the Navy stood by its earlier description of the incident Wednesday.

"Regarding any other interactions with our ships, U.S. forces continue to remain vigilant and are trained to act in a professional manner," Pagano told The Associated Press in reference to the Guard's claims of other recent incidents.

The incident comes amid still-heightened tensions between Iran and the U.S. despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Armed

men boarded a Hong Kong-flagged tanker ship Tuesday off the coast of Iran near the crucial Strait of Hormuz, holding the ship for a short time near the Iranian coast before releasing it. Though Iran has not acknowledged the incident, private security firms say the Guard was behind the seizure.

In a tweet Sunday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif kept up his criticism of President Donald Trump, claiming Iran soon would export ventilators despite facing one of the world's worst outbreaks.

"All you need to do is stop interfering in the affairs of other nations; mine especially," Zarif wrote. "And believe me, we do not take advice from ANY American politician."



U.S. Navy/AP

Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels sail close to U.S. military ships Wednesday in the Persian Gulf near Kuwait.

City near home of US Forces Japan has no infection cases



THERON GODDOLD/Stars and Stripes

Smokers practice social distancing at a smoking area outside the main train station in Fussa, Japan, Friday. Fussa is one of the few cities with no virus cases.

By SETH ROBSON
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A city bordering the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo is among the few in a prefecture hard-hit by the coronavirus that has yet to report a resident infected by the disease.

The Japanese capital had 2,596 virus cases and 56 deaths by Thursday when 149 new cases were reported.

However, Fussa city, population 57,459, the area of Tokyo immediately outside the main gate of Yokota Air Base, where USFJ is headquartered, has been coronavirus free.

On Friday traffic appeared to be normal along Route 16, the main thoroughfare passing the base. Shops were open selling everything from bicycles to televisions and crowds of mask-wearing shoppers bagged their groceries at a supermarket.

It's unclear why there are no cases in Fussa, said Miharu Harada, a city health division official. The city has provided information for people on ways to stop

spreading the virus on its website and magazine and closed public facilities and canceled events, such as its popular Tanabata Festival.

"We have been calling attention to the residents extensively to stay home, wash hands and to avoid closed places," she said. "We think people are being careful in their daily lives."

Likewise, Yokota has reported no cases of coronavirus among the base population since Defense Secretary Mark Esper on March 27 ordered commanders to stop announcing new infections on their installations, citing a concern that potential adversaries might exploit that information.

USFJ commander Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider on Wednesday declared a public health emergency for all U.S. military bases in Japan, expanding an earlier order that covered only the area in and around Tokyo.

Commanders of U.S. bases on the Kanto Plain, which includes the Tokyo metro area and its surroundings, have declared their own public health emergencies that allow them to restrict the movements and activities, not only of troops, but also civil-

ian employees, family members, retirees, contractors and local nationals with access to the facilities.

People living and working at Yokota have been restricted to the base or their homes but may shop for essential items and services in Fussa.

Several other towns within Tokyo, including Mizuho, Okutama, Hinode and Hinohara as well as islands administered by the city government, have also not reported virus cases, according to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's website.

Only a handful of cases have been announced in areas near Yokota. For example, Akishima city, population 80,624, had three cases and Tachikawa city, population 183,918, had eight cases, the website states.

The sections of central Tokyo with the highest numbers of cases are Setagaya with 243 followed by Shinjuku with 187, the website states.

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Marines in Japan tighten liberty restrictions as cases rise on Okinawa

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Marine Forces Japan imposed more stringent off-base liberty restrictions Friday as the coronavirus continues to spread throughout the region.

The orders were announced in the evening by the III Marine Expeditionary Force on Okinawa and took effect immediately, a Marine statement said.

Marines in Japan are now barred from using non-military public and mass transportation, including taxis, and are allowed off-base only to patronize essential services, the statement said. Those are limited to medical and veterinary appointments, grocery shopping, bill paying, purchasing

gas at service stations and postal services.

Marines are no longer allowed to take annual leave or visit off-base homes unless they live there, III Marine Expeditionary Force spokesman 1st Lt. Ryan Bruce told Stars and Stripes in an email Friday evening.

Marines are barred from eating in off-base restaurants, getting takeout or drive-thru meals, the Marine statement said. They are also barred from off-base schools and child care facilities.

Marines may run, hike and swim off base, as long as they avoid close contact with others and maintain social distancing protocols, the statement said. They are no longer allowed to participate in activities with more

than two people unless they are immediate family, Bruce added.

The guidance also applies to dependents, Defense Department civilian employees and contractors, the statement said. The government of Japan on Okinawa and the prefectural government have been notified as a courtesy.

There are approximately 30,000 Marines based throughout Japan, with the majority in Okinawa, Bruce said.

The statement came two days after U.S. Forces Japan declared a public health emergency for all U.S. military facilities in the country and a day after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced a nationwide state of emergency.

"These changes are motivated

by the continued spread of coronavirus cases throughout the region, USFJ's declaration of a Japan-wide public health emergency, and the Government of Japan's expanded state of emergency to encompass all of Japan," the statement said. "These preventive measures are intended to ensure the protection of the force, our families, and our local communities, both on and off-base."

Marine Forces Japan plans to continue "essential training and activities" while limiting the potential for exposure to coronavirus through social distancing, teleworking and other practices, it added.

"We will maintain our proficiency and readiness in support of our allies and partners in the

Indo-Pacific," the statement said.

The measures will be "continually assessed" to determine if additional measures are needed or if they can be relaxed, it added.

As of Friday, Okinawa had reported 105 confirmed virus cases, the prefectural government website said. These include a girl who tested positive at the airport but was counted in another prefecture's tally and two U.S. airmen and a family member from Kadena Air Base.

The number of cases had doubled in a week's time, Gov. Denny Tamaki said at a press conference Friday, according to the Okinawa Times.

Stars and Stripes reporter Aya Ichihashi contributed to this report.
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VIRUS OUTBREAK



PHOTOS BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Eamonn Dugan, an intelligence analyst with the 41st Field Artillery Brigade, wipes down an M240B machine gun during an exercise at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, on Friday.

Soldiers glad to be firing guns at Grafenwoehr training area

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Several soldiers with the 41st Field Artillery Brigade smiled a little wider than usual as they fired their M240B machine guns downrange at Grafenwoehr Training Area on Friday.

Like most people, they spend more time indoors and away from others than they did before the spread of the coronavirus.

"Instead of sitting at home, we are out here moving around, seeing what everyone is doing and talking to them," said Pfc. JeanCarlo Ciprian, a signal support system specialist.

With a few extra range safety measures, including handwashing stations, they shot up the targets just like they would have before the pandemic.

"We are practicing social distancing, [soldiers] are washing their hands and wiping down the weapons after they use them to prevent the spread of germs," said Sgt. Kenneth Jenkins, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 41st FAB.

The goal was for each of the 25 soldiers to hit six of 11 targets, which qualifies them on their weapons.



Spc. Nicholas Smith, a fire support specialist with the 41st Field Artillery Brigade, left, fires an M240B machine gun as Sgt. Eamonn Dugan, center, and Spc. Luis Garcia, right, observe.

The M240B is capable of firing up to 950 cyclic rounds per minute, though it's more commonly fired in shorter, six- to 13-round bursts, according to the Army field manual on the weapon.

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Service member's wife tests positive nearly 2 weeks after return to S. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The wife of a U.S. service member tested positive for coronavirus on Friday, nearly two weeks after she returned to South Korea from the United States, raising the total number of cases affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea to 25, the command said.

The woman, whose husband is stationed at Camp Carroll, had gone into a mandatory quarantine at her family's off-base residence in Waegwan after arriving in South Korea on April 4, officials said.

She was tested before she was due to be released, according to new requirements, although she showed no symptoms, Gen. Robert

Abrams said in a community update on Facebook live.

The results came back positive on Friday, and she was being taken to a designated barracks at Camp Humphreys for isolation, according to the command.

Two service members had picked her up at the airport, but they were protective gear and already have tested negative for the virus, Abrams said, adding the contact tracing was not required since she had followed procedure and been quarantined.

"It's really a testament that our procedures and our processes are working," he said.

Only two American soldiers have contracted the respiratory disease since an outbreak began in South Korea in late February. The other confirmed cases have

been military dependents, contractors and other U.S. and South Korean civilians linked to USFK.

The command has begun requiring that anybody affiliated with USFK who travels to South Korea from overseas must be quarantined a minimum 14 days upon arrival, be monitored for symptoms and "complete two COVID-19 tests with confirmed negative results to exit quarantine."

The overall pace of infections in South Korea has slowed, with only 22 new cases recorded on Thursday, including 14 in people arriving from abroad, according to the Korea Centers for Disease Control. South Korea reported just eight more cases Sunday, The Associated Press reported.

USFK bans US contractor for violating orders

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — An American contractor who works at Camp Humphreys has been banned from all U.S. bases in South Korea for two years for violating coronavirus quarantine orders by visiting base shopping facilities, the military said Friday.

It was the first such action since USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams declared a public health emergency in late March that gave him the authority to punish civilians as well as service members who violate measures aimed at preventing the spread of the virus.

Abrams announced Friday that he is extending the public health emergency to May 23, saying it also gives him authority to repurpose facilities on installations and to take other additional measures as needed.

"It's not really about increased risk. It's about giving us the appropriate authorities to be able to protect the force," he said in a community update via Facebook live.

U.S. Forces Korea said the contractor, whose name was not released because of privacy considerations, had been instructed to go into quarantine after having direct contact with a co-worker who had tested positive for the virus.

"The individual chose to non-comply with the quarantine directive and visited the PX and the commissary," the command said. "This individual's disregard for USFK's public health guidance and health protection conditions jeopardizes the safety of all USFK personnel and families."

The ban took effect on Tuesday, according to a notice by USFK.

"The contractor has finished his quarantine, was tested and results came back negative," USFK spokesman Col. Lee Peters said in response to a question about the contractor's current status.

"We are confident that there was no exposure to others as both locations he visited — commissary and PX — are routinely cleaned daily," he added.

At least six soldiers also have received nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for going to bars off-base or otherwise violating restrictions on nonessential movement off-base, according to the Eighth Army.

Two privates assigned to the 210th Field Artillery Brigade at Camp Casey had to forfeit pay and

'This individual's disregard for USFK's public health guidance and health protection conditions jeopardizes the safety of all.'

U.S. Forces Korea

received extra duty and a written reprimand for traveling to Camp Humphreys without authorization on March 28, violating their unit's sign-out policy and possessing alcohol while underage.

Two privates first class with the 210 FAB were reduced in rank, forfeited pay and received written reprimands for drinking in a bar on March 14 in Dongducheon, the city that is home to Camp Casey, near the border with North Korea.

A specialist with the same brigade received the same punishment for drinking in a bar on March 20 in Dongducheon.

A sergeant first class with the 2nd Combat Aviation Brigade had to forfeit pay and received a written reprimand for visiting an off-post bar in Songtan, the area outside Osan Air Base, on March 31.

Abrams clamped down on civilians after a contractor who works at Eighth Army headquarters tested positive after he continued to go to restaurants in the local community despite restrictions on nonessential activities off base.

That was followed by a spike in infections with a total of 10 contractors who work on Camp Humphreys testing positive. In all, USFK has reported 25 coronavirus cases, including two soldiers.

USFK promised to routinely publish actions taken to enforce compliance with rules to contain the virus "to ensure our service members, civilians, contract employees, family members and the community understand the adverse actions of not following USFK directives."

Two civilians also were barred from Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, after security personnel found them in an off-base bar in violation of similar restrictions set by the Navy to fight the coronavirus, officials said earlier this week.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Life: Virus claims veteran honored for Vietnam War heroics

FROM FRONT PAGE

don't have time to talk about all of them," Obama said during the ceremony.

Adkins was born in Waurika, Okla., and drafted into the military at age 22 in 1956. He volunteered for the Army's Special Forces and deployed three times to Vietnam between 1963 and 1971.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor for acts of valor during his second tour in Vietnam in 1966. At the time, he was a sergeant first class serving with detachment A-102, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces. Adkins was an intelligence sergeant, and his unit was responsible for tracking enemy movements.

Early on the morning of March 9, 1966, hundreds of North Vietnamese descended on their camp, Camp A Shau, which was also pounded with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. Adkins rushed through the intense enemy fire to man a mortar position to repel the attack, his Medal of Honor citation says. Despite being wounded by shrapnel, Adkins ran through mortar fire to reach wounded soldiers and drag them to safety.

Enemy forces launched their main attack the following day. Within hours, Adkins was the only soldier left firing mortars. When he was out of rounds, he used a recoilless rifle, small arms and hand grenades to fight off intense waves of attacking Viet Cong,

the citation says. He ran back and forth from a mortar pit to a bunker through enemy fire through the battle, gathering ammunition.

He and a small group of other soldiers destroyed their signal equipment and classified documents and then escaped by digging through the back of the bunker and fighting their way out of camp. Adkins led the men through the jungle until they were rescued by helicopter March 12.

He exhibited "extraordinary heroism and selflessness," the Medal of Honor citation reads.

"We were not going to be prisoners of war, whatever we had to do," Adkins said in a 2015 interview with Stars and Stripes.

Adkins and Katie Jackson, an instructor at Auburn University, co-authored a book in 2018 titled, "A Tiger Among Us: A Story of Valor in Vietnam's A Shau Valley." The book details Adkins' military experiences and his life after the Army. Jackson said she sat for multiple interviews with Adkins, collecting about 20 hours of tape to use for the book.



U.S. Army

Command Sgt. Maj. Bernie Adkins receives the Purple Heart while serving in Vietnam.

"I think what probably struck me is that he wasn't interested in bragging — it wasn't about him," Jackson said. "It was almost a challenge to get him to talk about himself. To talk about his own accomplishments was really hard for him to do."

Also apparent was his resilience, she said.

"He not only survived the battle and a number of other jobs with calls in his years of service, but he came back to a time when Vietnam veterans were discriminated against," Jackson said. "That's when he began to realize he wasn't going to have opportu-



STAFF SGT. BERNARDO FULLER, RELEASED/U.S. Army

President Barack Obama bestows the Medal of Honor to retired Command Sgt. Maj. Bernie G. Adkins, on Sept. 15, 2014. Adkins passed away from complications from the coronavirus.

nities, job-wise, when he retired. His further education became important to him."

Following his tours in Vietnam, Adkins held other jobs with the Army, including as a trainer at the jungle warfare school at Fort Sherman, located at the northern end of the Panama Canal. He retired from the Army as a command sergeant major in 1978.

Adkins and his wife, Mary, settled in Opelika. He established his own accounting firm and operated it for 22 years. He also taught classes as an adjunct instructor at Auburn University and Southern Union Junior Col-

lege in Wadley, Ala. He and Mary, who were married more than 60 years, had four sons, a daughter and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Mary Adkins died in February 2019.

Bernie Adkins was known as an animated storyteller who loved to crack jokes. For years, he traveled across the country speaking about his military experiences.

"My fourth career is traveling and trying to instill patriotism in our young people," he told Stars and Stripes.

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2 friends, advocates, Vietnam War veterans die days apart

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Vietnam War veterans Charles Sharples and Craige Osborne were friends, neighbors and part of the gay community in California's Coachella Valley.

They belonged to the same veterans organizations, volunteered and traveled together. They particularly enjoyed cruises. Their last cruise, at the beginning of March, was a one-week trip to the Mexican Riviera aboard the Norwegian Joy.

When they disembarked in Los Angeles on March 8, Sharples was weak, confused and had a fever. His friend and caretaker, Rick Tice, took him directly to Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.

Sharples, 76, died March 16 of complications from the coronavirus. Three days later, Osborne died too.

Sharples, to all who knew him, was a proud Marine — and a proud gay man. Sharples worked most of his life at gay businesses, including as manager of C.C.B.C., a gay resort in Cathedral City, Calif.

He was a leader — and one-time commander — of the local AMVETS post, which has a predominantly gay membership, and he was a founding member of the Palm Springs Gay Veterans club. In 1999, he and Hernandez joined others in the club to march in the city's annual Veterans Day



Christopher Damien

Vietnam War veterans Charles Sharples and Craige Osborne died days apart of complications from the coronavirus.

parade for the first time — an action that made national news.

In 2001, Sharples helped establish the country's first-ever memorial to honor gay veterans. The LGBTQ Veterans Memorial was dedicated in Desert Memorial Park in Cathedral City. In 2018, the state of California designated it as the state's official memorial to gay veterans.

Sharples also advocated against Don't Ask, Don't Tell, the U.S. military's policy that barred openly gay and lesbian people from serving. The policy went into effect in 1993 and was repealed in 2011.

Hernandez described Coachella Valley as a "paradise for gay veterans" — and Sharples was part of what made it that way.

Sharples grew up in Pennsylvania and

went to Pennsylvania State University, but he didn't graduate. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in the mid-1960s. Hernandez said Sharples participated in the Tet Offensive, one of the largest military campaigns of the Vietnam War and one that eroded America's support for the conflict.

Sharples spent 10 years in the Marine Corps and was honorably discharged as a captain.

Later in life, Sharples developed Parkinson's disease, which is known to be caused by exposure to Agent Orange, a chemical herbicide used by the U.S. military in Vietnam. It wasn't until a few years ago that Sharples decided to file a claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs to receive monthly compensation for his disease.

Osborne, 78, was a socialist who cared for his neighbors.

Chad Shipley, a friend of Sharples and an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran, said he will never forget Osborne's last words to him, days before his death.

After Osborne and Sharples disembarked from their final cruise and Sharples went to the hospital, Osborne returned home. He said he was feeling fine, Shipley recalled. At the time, no one knew Sharples was suffering from the coronavirus. It was the beginning of March, and the United States hadn't yet responded to the virus with any broad measures.

"I called him on the phone to check on

him," Shipley said. "His last words to me were, 'Hey buddy, I love you. Never forget that your love is one of the most important things to me. Have a great night.'"

Osborne was found dead in his home March 19. An official cause was unclear, but after Sharples' doctors confirmed he was infected with the coronavirus, their friends believe that's what led to Osborne's death.

Like Sharples, Osborne was highly involved in the local gay and veteran communities. He was a past leader with Disabled American Veterans and belonged to the local AMVETS post. He and Sharples went to a group brunch every Sunday at the nearby American Legion hall.

Osborne was born in Everett, Wash., and was drafted into the Army in 1966. He was trained as an infrared repairman and served in Vietnam.

Osborne had a long history in the Coachella Valley. Shipley described him as a self-sacrificing, dignified person who did as much as he could for his community.

"Charles Sharples and Craige Osborne were fierce advocates who represented AMVETS remarkably in California," AMVETS headquarters said in a statement. "On behalf of our entire organization, our hearts go out to their families and close friends. They will be deeply missed, and their continued service to veterans never forgotten."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pence: Cadets 'inspire confidence' in US

BY ZEKE MILLER
AND JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — In a symbolic nod to normalcy, Vice President Mike Pence delivered a commencement address to the U.S. Air Force Academy's graduating class on Saturday, telling the cadets that by setting off on their mission to defend the nation they "inspire confidence that we will prevail against the invisible enemy in our time as well."

Pence's trip, only his second outside Washington in the last six weeks, was aimed at showing that the country is on course to gradually reopening after weeks of the coronavirus shutdown.

He spoke at a scaled-down ceremony at the academy outside Colorado Springs, where hundreds of graduating cadets in blue and white dress uniforms sat eight feet apart, taking up an area nearly as large as a football field.

"I know we gather at a time of great challenge in the life of our nation," Pence said as he began his remarks. "And while we don't quite look like the usual graduation at the Air Force Academy, let me tell you, this is an awesome sight. And I wouldn't be anywhere else but with the 62nd class of the Air Force Academy, the class of 2020."

The event usually attracts a big crowd to Falcon Stadium, which has a maximum capacity of more than 46,000. President Donald Trump spoke last year. But this year, the pandemic forced the academy to close the ceremony to visitors, including friends and family of the nearly 1,000 graduates.

Still, the ceremony featured

its signature dramatic flyover by the Air Force Thunderbirds, which thundered overhead as the graduates threw their hats into the air and burst into cheers. But instead of being able to embrace their fellow graduates, the cadets remained several feet apart and then proceeded to tie on white face masks.

"You knew your graduation day would be memorable. But did you imagine that your commencement would take place in mid-April? Or that each of us would have a face mask at the ready? Or that you would march a COVID-compliant eight feet apart to the terrazzo?" asked Barbara Barrett, secretary of the Air Force.

As the ceremony began, graduates lined up outside and silently saluted the vice president's motorcade as he arrived on a nearby campus. They later filed into a stadium that was absolutely silent but for the drum roll and the rustling of starched pants marching in place.

At one point Pence asked the graduates to applaud the friends and family who "couldn't be here because of the extraordinary times in which we live." The cadets quickly rose to their feet, cheering and waving to those watching from home.

While much of the ceremony focused on the graduates, many of whom will be joining the new Space Force, Pence also spoke about the government's response to the coronavirus.

Still, he said, for "Americans looking on from around the country at this very hour, seeing you brave men and women setting off on your mission to defend this nation" would "inspire confidence that we will prevail against the



PHOTOS BY DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Cadets wearing face masks salute during the graduation ceremony for the class of 2020 at the U.S. Air Force Academy, on Saturday in Colorado.

invisible enemy in our time as well."

He later greeted graduates at a distance and met with small groups, including cadets from his home state of Indiana, who had their temperatures taken before meeting with the vice president.

Despite the starkly different visuals from previous years, Pence's day trip was meant as a signal to the nation that the pandemic response has entered a new phase.

Pence was initially meant to speak to the academy's graduates via recorded video.

He planned to continue his travels with a trip to Wisconsin on Tuesday.



Vice President Mike Pence delivered the commencement address Saturday during a scaled-down event.

Pressure: Countries grapple with isolation and depleting economies

FROM FRONT PAGE

as accessible a week later."

Spanish authorities said that children, after six weeks of confinement, will be allowed to leave their homes beginning April 27. Spain imposed one of the strictest lockdowns in Europe, helping drive down the daily increase in confirmed infections from more than 20% to 2% for a country whose 20,000 virus deaths are only surpassed by the United States and Italy.

Albania plans to let its mining and oil industries reopen Monday, along with hundreds of businesses including small retailers, food and fish factories, farmers and fishing boats.

The death toll in the U.S. is nearing 40,000 with more than 735,000 confirmed infections, and the global case count has passed 2.3 million, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University of national health reports. The actual extent of the pandemic is likely to be significantly higher due to mild infections that are missed, limited testing, problems counting the dead and some nations' desires to underplay their outbreaks.

The International Monetary Fund expects the global economy to contract 3%

this year — a far bigger loss than 2009's 0.1% after the global financial crisis.

Still, many governments are resisting pressure to abruptly relax the coronavirus lockdowns.

"We must not let down our guard until the last confirmed patient is recovered," South Korea's President Moon Jae-in said Sunday.

The country, which was hit early on by the virus, announced that new infections fell Sunday to eight, from a peak of 909 on Feb. 29. But officials have warned that a "quiet spread" of the virus is possible as people relax social distancing.

British officials, who reported 888 new hospital deaths from the virus, said they're not ready to ease lockdown measures. U.K. minister Michael Gove said Britain still needs to develop its testing and contact tracing program, beef up the National Health Service and make sure that infection and death rates have fallen.

"It's only when we have all those measures in place that we can be confident about relaxing some of the measures," Gove told the BBC on Sunday, adding that pubs and restaurants "will be among the last" to leave the lockdown, which is now in place until May 7.

U.K. health experts fear that Britain, which has nearly 15,500 confirmed deaths so far, could eventually have the highest virus death toll in Europe.

France's health agency urged the public to stick to social distancing measures that have been extended until at least May 11. "Don't relax our efforts at the moment when confinement is bearing fruit," the agency said.

In the U.S., supporters of President Donald Trump protested in several states Saturday, ignoring social distancing and stay-at-home orders to demand that governors end controls on public activity. They were goaded on by tweets from Trump, who called on several states with Democratic governors to "LIBERATE."

Trump is pushing to relax the U.S. lockdown by May 1, a plan that hinges partly on more testing. Pence told NBC's "Meet the Press" that the country has "sufficient testing today" for states to begin reopening their economies as part of the initial phases of guidelines that the White House released last week.

Texas, Indiana and some other states have announced plans to allow some retailing and other activity to resume. Florida

and South Carolina have reopened beaches, with some drawing noticeable crowds.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who has criticized the federal response as inadequate, rejected pressure to reopen businesses. New York's daily death toll fell below 550 on Saturday for the first time in two weeks, but Cuomo said hospitals are still reporting nearly 2,000 new patients a day.

"We are not at a point when we are going to be reopening anything immediately," Cuomo said.

In Pakistan, Prime Minister Imran Khan's government bowed to demands by religious leaders and agreed to keep mosques open during the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan. Pakistan has been blamed for contributing to the virus's spread by refusing to stop a gathering of tens of thousands of religious missionaries. Nearly 2,000 confirmed cases have been traced to them.

In Singapore, McDonald's suspended operations after seven employees tested positive for the coronavirus. The company said it will keep paying more than 10,000 employees in 135 outlets during the closure, due to last through May 4.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Test troubles clouding Trump's recovery effort

BY MATTHEW PERRONE
AND MICHELLE R. SMITH
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States is struggling to test enough people to track and control the coronavirus spread, a crucial first step to reopening parts of the economy, which President Donald Trump is pushing to do by May 1.

Trump on Thursday released a plan to ease business restrictions that hinges on a downward trajectory of positive tests.

But more than a month after he declared, "Anybody who wants a test, can get a test," the reality has been different. People report being unable to get tested. Labs and public officials have said that supply shortages have made it impossible to increase testing to the levels experts have said is necessary to keep the virus at bay.

"There are places that have enough test swabs, but not enough workers to administer them. There are places that are limiting tests because of the CDC criteria on who should get tested," said Dr. Megan Ranney, an emergency physician and associate professor at Brown University.

Trump's plan envisions setting up "sentinel surveillance sites" that would screen people without symptoms in locations that serve older people or minority populations. Experts have said that testing would have to increase as much as threefold to be effective.

The plan pushes responsibility for testing onto states.

"The governors are responsible for testing," Trump told reporters at his daily briefing Friday. He said that the federal government would ship 5.5 million nasal swabs to states in the "next few weeks" to help address shortages.

"Swabs can be done easily by the governors themselves," Trump

said. "Mostly it's cotton, it's not a big deal."

But state and local officials, as well as lab managers, have said that they cannot expand testing until there are more supplies.

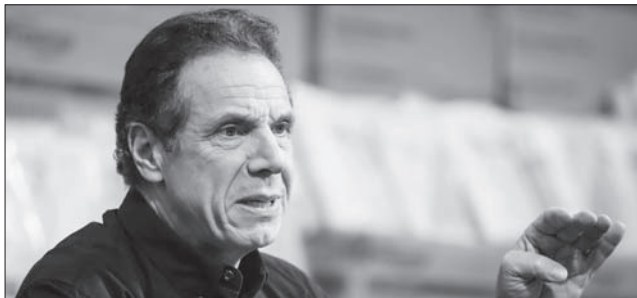
Governors, physician groups and laboratory directors have called on the Trump administration to address shortages of swabs, protective gear and highly specialized laboratory chemicals needed to analyze the virus' genetic material. Hospitals and state health departments have reported scouring the globe to secure orders, competing against each other and their peers abroad in a system that Gov. Andrew Cuomo, D-N.Y., described as "mayhem."

"The federal government cannot wipe their hands of this and say, 'Oh, the states are responsible for testing,'" Cuomo said Friday as he complained of a shortage of chemicals manufactured in China. "I don't do China relations. I don't do international supply chain."

Jennifer Rodriguez, a pharmacy technician at a major retail chain in California, said that she was sent home by her employer after coming down with symptoms. Her company would not test her, and she spent hours on the phone trying to find a place that would, she said.

The San Luis Obispo County health department can only test 50 samples per day, and a spokeswoman said that those tests are reserved for people who are hospitalized, first responders and those who have had contact with people who tested positive. Rodriguez didn't qualify. Another clinic told her that she might have to pay \$150 if it determined she did not fit its test criteria.

"I just feel like medical workers, or even people on the front line, they should have some kind of priority," said Rodriguez.



JOHN MINICILLO/AP

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and 16 other governors have organized three separate clusters of states committed to working together on reopening their economies.

Lacking US coordination, states teaming up on when to reopen

By GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press

President Donald Trump, in a roller-coaster week of reversals and contradictions, told governors to "call your own shots" on lifting stay-at-home orders once the coronavirus threat subsides. But then he took to Twitter to push some to reopen their economies quickly and tell them it was their job to ramp up testing.

"This is mayhem," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Friday. "We need a coordinated approach between the federal government and the states."

In the absence of one, Cuomo and 16 other governors representing half the nation's population have organized three separate clusters of states each committed to working together on the details of relaunching businesses, schools and events while avoiding a resurgence of infections.

The pacts have formed among states mostly with Democratic governors on the West Coast, around the Great Lakes and in the densely populated Northeast, covering several big metropolitan areas that cross state lines, including New York, Chicago and Philadelphia.

With commuters using interconnected trains in the Northeast

and family connections, vacation travel and tech hubs linking the West Coast states, California Gov. Gavin Newsom said that the teamwork recognizes "that this pandemic virus knows no boundaries, knows no borders, you can't build walls around it and you can't deny basic fundamental facts."

Others are going their own way, including the second-most populous state — Texas — where Gov. Greg Abbott said Friday that he would ease some pandemic-related restrictions next week. Florida, another state with a huge population, is also not in an alliance.

California, Oregon and Washington state have teamed up, and pacts have formed among Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island as well as Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Republican and Democratic governors said that they would be cautious on reopening and warned they won't be able to expand testing without help from the Trump administration.

Addisu Demissie, a Democratic strategist who managed Newsom's 2018 campaign, said that the alliances are "largely an

acknowledgment that the federal government is not going to get done what the states need to get done."

David Postman, chief of staff for Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, said that cooperating with California and Oregon — which also coordinate during wildfire season — would probably happen regardless of the Trump administration's approach.

While there are key differences between the states, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said that people "work in Oregon and live in Washington and obviously the reverse. And the same is true with California." She also said that it would be "extremely useful" to coordinate instead of compete for protective equipment.

Not everyone praises the teamwork.

In Connecticut, Republicans have criticized Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont for not having his own reopening plan.

"If governors want to consult with one another, that can be helpful, but Connecticut cannot wait on six other states, including states that do not even share a border with us, to agree on a path forward," state Senate Republican Leader Len Fasano said in a statement.

Deaths down in New York, but officials urge continued vigilance

Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York's daily toll of coronavirus deaths has hit its lowest point in more than two weeks, but officials still warned that New York City and the rest of the state aren't ready to ease up on shutdowns of schools, businesses and gatherings.

Mayor Bill de Blasio warned Sunday that with the arrival of spring weather, the city will step up enforcement of social distancing rules.

As of Saturday, the number of coronavirus deaths in New York state dropped under 550 for

the first time in over two weeks as hospitalizations continue to decline.

But the crisis is far from over: Hospitals are still reporting nearly 2,000 new COVID-19 patients per day, and de Blasio said that the temptation for cooped-up New Yorkers to take advantage of the spring weather presents new challenges to keep the outbreak in check.

Police and park officers will be out in force to break up outdoor gatherings that pose a risk, with violators facing potential fines of up to \$1,000, the mayor said. The city is encouraging people to test

authorities photos when they stop the gatherings.

"We do not want to see this disease boomerang," he said. "We do not want to see it come back with a vengeance."

The state logged 540 deaths Friday from COVID-19, the lowest number since April 1.

Nearly 13,000 New Yorkers have died since the state's first coronavirus case was reported March 1, the governor said. The state total doesn't include more than 4,000 New York City deaths that were blamed on the virus on death certificates but weren't confirmed by a lab test.

More than 2,700 people in New York nursing homes have died, by far more than in any other state.

According to de Blasio on Sunday, President Donald Trump is betraying his fellow New Yorkers by failing to push for billions of dollars in additional federal aid needed to help the city deal with the coronavirus economic crisis.

The mayor had harsh words for the Queens-born president, claiming that both he and Vice President Mike Pence have ignored his overtures on the stimulus funds.

"Right now you are failing to protect the very people you grew

up around," de Blasio said of Trump. "When New York City is in need, where are you?"

The number of New York Police Department officers calling out sick is also declining.

The nation's largest police department reported that 5,324 uniformed members — about 15% of the force — were out sick Saturday. That's down from a high of 7,155 officers — nearly 20% of the force — on April 9.

So far, more than 2,000 members of the NYPD have returned to work full time after recovering from a positive test for the coronavirus, police officials said.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Racial toll grows starker as more data emerges

By KAT STAFFORD,
MEGHAN HOYER
AND AARON MORRISON
Associated Press

As a clearer picture emerges of COVID-19's decidedly deadly toll on black Americans, leaders are demanding a reckoning of the systemic policies they said have made many African Americans far more vulnerable to the virus, including inequity in access to health care and economic opportunity.

A growing chorus of medical professionals, activists and political figures is pressuring the federal government to not just release comprehensive racial demographic data of the country's virus victims, but also to outline clear strategies to blunt the devastation on African Americans and other communities of color.

On Friday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released its first breakdown of COVID-19 case data by race, showing that 30% of patients whose race was known were black. The federal data was missing racial information for 75% of all cases, however, and did not include any demographic breakdown of deaths.

The latest Associated Press analysis of available state and local data shows that nearly one-third of those who have died are African American, with black people representing about 14% of the population in the areas covered in the analysis.

Roughly half the states, representing less than a fifth of the nation's COVID-19 deaths, have yet to release demographic data on fatalities. In states that have, about a quarter of the death records are missing racial details.

Health conditions that exist at higher rates in the black community — obesity, diabetes and asthma — make African Americans more susceptible to the virus. They are also more likely to be uninsured, and often report that medical professionals take their ailments less seriously when they seek treatment.

"It's America's unfinished business — we're free, but not equal," civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson told the AP. "There's a reality check that has been brought by the coronavirus, that exposes the weakness and the opportunity."

Jackson's Rainbow PUSH Coalition and the National Medical Association, a group representing African American physicians and patients, released a joint public health strategy calling for better COVID-19 testing and treatment data.

Jackson also expressed support for a national commission to study the black COVID-19 toll modeled after the Kerner Commission, which studied the root causes of race riots in African American communities in the 1960s and made policy recommendations to prevent future unrest.

Daniel Davies, director of Morehouse College's School of Medicine's Satcher Health Leadership Institute, said that America's history of segregation and policies led to the racial health disparities that exist today.

"If we do not take an appreciation for the historical context and the political determinants, then we're only merely going to nibble around the edges of the problem of inequities," he said.

The release of demographic data for the country's coronavirus victims remains a priority for many civil rights and public



JEFF ROBERSON/AP

Licensed practical nurse Lenora Shepard, left, removes a protective gown next to registered medical assistant Lauesha Plummer after working at a drive-thru COVID-19 testing site in St. Louis. The latest AP analysis shows that nearly one-third of those who have died from the virus are African American.

health advocates, who have said that the numbers are needed to address disparities in the national response to the pandemic.

The AP analysis, based on data through Thursday, found that of the more than 21,500 victims whose demographic data was known and disclosed by officials, more than 6,350 were black — a rate of nearly 30%. African Americans account for 14.2% of the 241 million people who live in the areas covered by the analysis, which encompasses 24 states and the cities of Washington, Houston, Memphis, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia — places where statewide data was unavailable.

In some areas, Native American communities also have been hit hard. In New Mexico, Native Americans account for nearly 37% of the state's 1,484 cases and about 11% of the state's population. Of the 112 deaths where race is known in Arizona, 30 were Native Americans.

After Democratic lawmakers introduced legislation to try compel federal health officials to post daily data breaking down cases and deaths by race, ethnicity and other demographics, the CDC released only caseload data that — similar to the AP's analysis of deaths — show that 30% of 111,633 infected patients whose race is known were black. African American patients in the 45-to-64 and 65-to-74 age groups represented an even larger share of the national caseload.

The lawmakers sent a letter last month to Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar urging federal release of the demographic data. And Joe Biden, the former vice president and presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, also called for its release.

Meanwhile, some black leaders have described the Trump administration's response to COVID-19 as inadequate, after

what they said was a hastily organized call with Vice President Mike Pence and CDC Director Robert Redfield.

Mistrust runs deep among residents in many communities.

St. Louis resident Randy Barnes is grappling not just with the emotional toll of losing his brother to the coronavirus, but also with the feeling that his brother's case was not taken seriously.

Barnes said that the hospital where his brother sought treatment initially sent him home without testing him and suggested he self-quarantine for 14 days. Five days later, his brother was back in the hospital, where he was placed on a ventilator for two weeks. He died April 13. Barnes' brother and his wife were also caring for an 88-year-old man in the same apartment, who died from the virus around the same time.

"Those people are not being tested," Barnes said. "They're not being cared for."

Puerto Rico under scrutiny as youngest virus patient dies

By DANICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Puerto Ricans are becoming increasingly disgruntled with how the government is handling the COVID-19 crisis as more details emerge, including those about the death of a 29-year-old man who became the U.S. territory's youngest victim after his father said that he wasn't tested the first two times he sought help at an emergency room.

The allegation was made as the government announced Saturday that a private company took responsibility for disconnecting a refrigerated trailer packed with

food that was supposed to be distributed to those in need amid a two-month lockdown to curb coronavirus cases, causing chicken, vegetables, fruits and other items to spoil.

"This is completely unacceptable," said Public Safety Director Pedro Janer.

He said that while the government will be reimbursed, the incident is under investigation after the company said that it got instructions to disconnect the trailer from an employee of a local emergency management office.

The food was left over from when Puerto Rico was hit with a series of strong earthquakes in recent months that killed one per-

son and caused millions of dollars in damage along the island's southern coast. Officials did not provide the estimated cost of the food lost.

Meanwhile, newly appointed Health Secretary Lorenzo Gonzalez acknowledged during Saturday's press conference that the island's virus-related data is not entirely accurate because some positive cases might have been counted twice, and that the government is working to improve it.

"It's imperfect data, but we're going to use it ... because it's the one we have," he said.

Gonzalez said that he hopes to eventually make missing data available, including the number

of people who have recuperated from COVID-19.

Puerto Rico has reported more than 1,100 confirmed cases and more than 1,700 pending test results, with a total of 10,900 tested on an island of 3.2 million, the lowest per capita testing rate compared with any U.S. state.

At least 60 deaths have been reported, including that of a 29-year-old man whose father identified him as Joshua James Sanchez and said that he had no chronic health conditions. The father, Luis Angel Sanchez, accused health workers in a social media post of testing and admitting his son only after he went into respiratory failure.

"I don't wish this disastrous experience on anybody," he said.

Sanchez did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

As a growing number of Puerto Ricans demand more widespread testing, among other things, they have organized drive-by protests and bang on pots every night to signal their displeasure with the administration of Gov. Wanda Vazquez, who has been praised, however, for placing the island on lockdown since March 15.

The lockdown is scheduled to expire on May 3, but Gonzalez said that he will recommend it be extended to at least June 1 since the peak of cases isn't expected until early May.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Trump's foreign aid disdain collides with pandemic

By MATTHEW LEE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's well-known disdain for foreign aid is colliding with the imperatives of fighting the coronavirus pandemic, as his administration boasts about America's generosity for countries in dire need while still generating confusion and anger on the global stage.

The United States has committed more than \$500 million in anti-virus aid for foreign countries since January — a sign that some administration officials recognize Trump's "America First" policy can't fully protect Americans from a highly infectious disease that knows no borders. They also know that if the U.S. doesn't help, archrivals like China and Russia will gladly step in to fill the void, in part to advance their narrative that the era of U.S.-led Western leadership is over.

For instance, two years after slashing virtually all U.S. aid to the Palestinians, the administration announced Thursday that it would provide \$5 million in assistance to Palestinian hospitals and households for "immediate, life-saving needs in combating COVID-19."

In just the past several weeks, however, the administration has sent conflicting messages about its commitment to assist, suspending contributions to the very organization tasked with battling the global outbreak and reversing decisions to provide critical equipment like personal protective gear and ventilators to other countries in order to meet domestic needs.



ALEX BRANDON/AP

President Donald Trump's administration boasts about the U.S.'s generosity for countries in dire need during the pandemic, while generating confusion on the global stage

It has left aid recipients uncertain about whether grant money from the U.S. can be used to buy those same items, even if they weren't intended for distribution in the U.S.

The latest in the jarring moves came Tuesday when Trump announced the suspension of U.S. funding for the World Health Organization pending a review of whether the agency bowed to Chinese demands to downplay the threat of the pandemic in its early stages for political purposes.

Just two weeks earlier, the State Department had hailed both WHO and the support U.S. provided for it.

"WHO is coordinating the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is on the ground in 149 countries around the world," it said in a March 31 fact sheet touting America's generosity. "This broad-based effort would not be possible without U.S. support."

An update to that fact sheet, released Thursday, does not mention WHO.

Trump's funding suspension decision was widely denounced.

"Abandoning this critical body will only put more lives at risk," said Michelle Nunn, head of the relief agency CARE USA, one of many humanitarian groups to condemn it. "The Trump admin-

istration's decision to halt funding to the WHO during a global pandemic is dangerous, self-defeating and short-sighted."

Just six days before Trump's announcement, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had announced that the U.S. would almost double its overseas virus aid to nearly \$500 million since January. He referred to the "unmatched generosity of the American people" and said that "the United States has continued to lead the world's public health and humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Pandemics do not respect national borders," he said April 8. "Through decades of U.S. global

leadership in health and humanitarian assistance, we know that smart and strategic investments have proven critical to protecting the homeland. As history proves, we can fight pandemics at home and help other nations contain their spread abroad."

Pompeo, however, also introduced a caveat to American aid. He said that assistance to the 64 nations identified as most at-risk would not include personal protective equipment and other essential supplies.

"We will keep all critical medical items in the United States until the demand at home is met," he said.

An April 10 directive from the Federal Emergency Management Agency barring the export of personal protective gear made in the U.S. or by U.S. companies abroad has left many in government and aid organizations confused about what American assistance can be used by once it arrives at its destination.

Some groups fear that the administration may use that directive or a corollary to ban them from using grant money to purchase certain types of gloves, face masks and other respirators, according to relief agency officials.

One group, Partners in Health, a Massachusetts-based non-governmental group that runs medical facilities in Haiti, said that it had been advised through "official channels" not to apply for funding that could be used to purchase equipment to battle COVID-19 because it could be delayed by confusion over whether the U.S. would finance such purchases.

Official at Wuhan lab denies virus originated there

By JESSICA SCHLADEBECK
New York Daily News

A laboratory in the Chinese city of Wuhan, located just miles away from the wet market where officials said that the coronavirus first emerged, has denied accusations the disease originated at the institute before it spread and infected millions worldwide.

Yuan Zhiming, vice director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, in an interview with Chinese state

broadcaster CGTN, dismissed the claims as a "conspiracy theory" designed to "confuse" people. Scientists at the facility do research on coronaviruses that originate in bats, which has prompted speculation regarding the Wuhan lab in recent weeks.

His comments mark the first time anyone from the institute has discussed the global outbreak since it first emerged in China at the end of last year.

"As people who carry out viral study, we clearly know what kind of research is going on in the institute and how the institute manages viruses and samples," Yuan said. "As we said early on, there is no way this virus came from us."

Yuan, a microbiology and biotechnology expert who trained in France, Denmark and the United States, also noted that a man-made coronavirus resembling the one ripping across the globe

is beyond the scope of human intelligence.

The Chinese government has long denied that the lab was to blame and almost immediately pointed to a wet market in the city of Wuhan as the virus source. But there have been several questions raised about that theory since the illness has killed more than 156,000 people worldwide.

In recent weeks, President Donald Trump has placed blame

on China and its lack of transparency at the start of the outbreak. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also seemed to acknowledge theories about the lab in Wuhan.

"We know there is the Wuhan Institute of Virology a couple miles away from where the wet market was," Pompeo told Fox News. "There is still lots to learn. The United States government is working diligently to figure it out."

Eastern Christians mark Easter in shuttered Jerusalem church

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — A handful of Eastern Orthodox priests held mass for the Christian holiday of Easter on Sunday in an empty Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem due to restrictions in place to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

Eastern Christians rites mark Easter, the day Christians believe Jesus was resurrected after his crucifixion, a week after the Catholic rite.

Ordinarily, the church would be

filled with faithful and tourists, but travel restrictions imposed by Israel to prevent the spread of the coronavirus have prevented the arrival of pilgrims to Jerusalem for the springtime holiday and limited the gathering of worshippers at the church.

Easter mass was performed by a small group of clergy at the Holy Sepulcher, where many Christians believe that Jesus was entombed. The square outside was empty and the church's large wooden doors barred shut, but a

few individual worshippers came to pray outside.

Israel has recorded over 13,000 COVID-19 cases and over 170 deaths.

A day earlier, a small group of clerics at the church celebrated the ancient Holy Fire ceremony, which normally draws enormous crowds as a flame is transferred to faithful around the globe from within a chamber where Christians believe that Jesus was buried and rose from the dead.

In Egypt, Pope Tawadros II,

the spiritual leader of the country's Coptic Orthodox Christians, held Easter services in an empty monastery in the desert amid coronavirus restrictions that kept faithful from gathering at churches and monasteries across the country.

The services were held at the Monastery of Saint Pishoy, in a desert valley west of Cairo known as Wadi Natrun. A few clergymen attended the services, which was aired on a Coptic Orthodox television station. The clerics were

seen practicing social distancing during the prayers.

The Coptic Orthodox Church, one of the world's oldest Christian communities, decided earlier this month to suspend Easter prayers and celebrations at churches and monasteries because of the spread of the deadly virus.

Christians constitute about 10% of Egypt's over 100 million predominantly Muslim population. Egypt, the Arab world's most populous country, has 5,032 cases including 224 deaths.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



MICHAEL PROBST/AP

Junior director Christine Lang of the “Wernecker brewery” Friday stands in the brewhouse of the brewery in Werneck, Germany. Due to the impact of the coronavirus, the traditional brewery has to close 400 years after its foundation.

Germany’s tradition-laden breweries struggle to survive during pandemic

BY CHRISTOPH NOELTING
AND DAVID MCHUGH
Associated Press

WERNECK, Germany — The Werneck Brewery has survived a lot: world wars, economic crises and decades of declining beer consumption. But after 400 years in existence, it has finally met a challenge it can’t overcome: the coronavirus outbreak.

The brewery, which traces its history to 1617 and has been owned by the same family since 1861, is closing for good, taking with it 15 full-time jobs and more part-time positions. Also gone is a chunk of local history and tradition in Werneck, a town of 10,000 people in the brewery-rich southern state of Bavaria.

German brewers fear its demise is the leading edge of more closures as the virus outbreak threatens the existence of the country’s many local producers of the national beverage — community institutions, often family owned for generations, whose buildings and affiliated taverns are regional landmarks in a country where the hometown brew is often a sentimental favorite despite competition from national

brands.

Hardest hit are smaller breweries like the one in Werneck that depend on supplying kegs to local taverns and events such as local festivals. Restaurants are closed and the government says mass gatherings will not resume until Sept. 1 at the earliest — and even then it may take years before they rebound to levels seen before the virus outbreak.

Retail sales are providing some support as people drink at home. Breweries are trying things like drive-through sales and even shipping beer and glasses to customers so they can join an online tasting.

But for many the months without income may be more than they can handle.

Family member and brewery manager Christine Lang said the decision to close came with “many tears.” The beer market was already hard fought with tough price competition, she said. Then came the virus, and the restaurant customers the brewery depended on were suddenly closed, with no clarity on when they might open.

“No one knows how long the

coronavirus will last, when there will be an improvement, and whether the restaurants will open again at all,” she said. “And in our business, it’s the case that a beer that isn’t drunk today won’t be consumed twice in a couple of months, the sales revenue is gone, lost.”

According to a survey by the national brewers association some 87% of breweries say they are putting workers on short hours, taking advantage of a government program that pays up to 60% of net salaries during business interruptions. The program is aimed at getting companies through a crisis, keeping workers from being laid off, and supporting consumer spending in the economy. But other programs such as credits and delays in collecting taxes are less useful, brewers say. Credits mean taking on new debt for the future, and the taxes will eventually have to be paid as well.

Holger Eichele, secretary-general of the German Brewers Association, said that “many breweries will not survive this crisis, that is already becoming clear.”

Trudeau: US-Canada border to remain shut

dp

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Saturday that Canada and the United States had agreed to keep their border closed for all nonessential travel for another 30 days.

“Canada and the United States have agreed to extend by another 30 days the border measures that are currently in place,” Trudeau

said during televised remarks. He said the move will “keep people on both sides of the border safe.”

The two countries temporarily closed their border on March 18.

The U.S. has imposed a range of measures to limit the entrance of foreign nationals from areas hit hard by the coronavirus, including China and Europe.

The majority of Canadians live in areas close to the 5,500-mile U.S. border, and communities on both sides of the frontier maintain close links.

The U.S. and Canada have daily trade worth about \$2 billion. U.S. goods and services trade with Canada totaled an estimated \$718.5 billion in 2018, according to U.S. trade authorities.

Cruise that began before outbreak nears end of trip

Associated Press

ROME — Passengers on a luxury liner’s around-the-world cruise, begun before the globe was gripped by the coronavirus pandemic, are finally approaching the end of their odyssey after 15 weeks at sea.

Their ship, the Costa Deliziosa, heads to ports in Spain and Italy, two of the countries most devastated by the coronavirus outbreak.

Costa Crociere, an Italian cruise company, said Saturday that the Deliziosa, which set sail from Venice in early January with 1,831 passengers, has reached the western Mediterranean, with no cases of COVID-19 aboard.

The Deliziosa, a nearly 1,000-foot vessel, will disembark 168 Spanish passengers early next week at the port of Barcelona, Spain, the company said. Then the Deliziosa will head to its final destination, Genoa, Italy, where it is expected to disembark the remaining passengers, Italians and those of other nationalities, Wednesday.

A company spokesman said a passenger left the ship earlier in the week in Marsala, Sicily, for health issues and had a COVID-19 test, which was negative.

Being on the liner for weeks during the pandemic “was not surreal, it was incredible,” said passenger Carlos Paya, who lives in Valencia, Spain, and is sailing with his wife. He added that they have family members in Spain.

“The news that was arriving from home was causing us all a lot of worry and grief,” he told The Associated Press by text message Saturday evening. “For us, it was a stroke of good luck to be where we were.”

From Perth (Australia) given

the growth of the pandemic, and of course for those of us who have children in Spain, we would have preferred to return,” he added.

“Other passengers, on the other hand, given their old age, wanted to stay on board knowing that the boat was safe and secure.”

French authorities had refused a request by Costa for permission to disembark several hundred passengers from France and nearby countries at Marseilles. “The health situation on board the ships, with 1,814 guests and 898 members of the crew, doesn’t present any problem for public health and no case of COVID-19,” Costa’s statement said.

The Deliziosa was originally due to return to Venice on April 26. After the U.N. World Health Organization pandemic alert in March, the ship, which had just made a port call in Fremantle, western Australia, made only technical and refueling stops, before the journey back toward the Mediterranean, which took it through the Suez Canal, according to the company.

Passenger Jean-Pierre Escarras, from Marseilles, shot a video of their cabin that they daughters shared on social networks, in which he says: “This is our place of confinement. We are lucky to have a window.”

The couple said that after a stop in Sydney, the ship’s activities were “reduced or sometimes canceled. We haven’t been able to get out on land since March 14 — that’s 34 days.”

The passengers said that ports in Oman, along the Suez Canal, as well as in the Seychelles and Indian Ocean ports, refused to let the ship dock.



LUIGI COSTANTINI/AP

The Costa Deliziosa, shown in 2015, began an around-the-world cruise before the globe was gripped by the coronavirus pandemic. Passengers on the ship are finally approaching their odyssey’s end after 15 weeks at sea.

NATION

Video tribute honors Oklahoma bombing victims

By SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Survivors and loved ones of the 168 people who were killed in the Oklahoma City bombing weren't able to gather Sunday on the grounds of the city's memorial to mark the 25th anniversary of the attack, but that won't stop them from remembering.

Because the annual remembrance ceremony was canceled due to coronavirus restrictions, those who died were instead honored with a video tribute that included the reading of the names of those who died followed by 168 seconds of silence.

U.S. Sen. James Lankford, Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt and Tony award-winning actress and singer Kristin Chenoweth, an Oklahoma native, are among those who delivered tributes in the prerecorded video.

Ordinarily, the city would have gathered Sunday at the site of the former Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building that was destroyed by a truck bomb on April 19, 1995.

Kari Watkins, the director of the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum, said this year's social distancing restrictions are necessary but unfortunate, as survivors and victims' family members often only see each other this one time each year.

"It's just a nice time for them to come and be together," she said. "They'll miss that, but they'll have another time when it's safe to gather and we'll come back together and do something, whenever that day is."

Holt said the 25th anniversary of the attack is particularly notable in that it marks a transition of the event from one of personal experience to historical event.

"The march of time is relentless, and every year that passes, fewer and fewer people have a direct connection to it," Holt said. "The 25th is another time for us here in Oklahoma City to refocus on what makes the event and the site relevant in the decades to come."

For Holt, that means spreading the message that political violence is never the answer.



Sue Oerocsa/AP

Lynne Gist sits next to her sister's memorial in the Field of Empty Chairs on Wednesday at the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum in Oklahoma City. The city canceled its observance of the 25th anniversary since the Oklahoma City bombing because of coronavirus restrictions.

People in Oklahoma City sort

of have a special obligation to stand for the idea that we have

much more in common than we have different," he said.

10 years after rig blast, wells drilled deeper, rules relaxed

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Ten years after an oil rig explosion killed 11 workers and unleashed an environmental nightmare in the Gulf of Mexico, companies are drilling in deeper and deeper waters, where payoffs can be huge but risks are greater than ever.

Industry leaders and government officials say they're determined to prevent a repeat of BP's Deepwater Horizon disaster, which spilled 134 million gallons of oil that fouled beaches from Louisiana to Florida, killed hundreds of thousands of marine animals, and devastated the tourist economy.

Yet safety rules adopted in the spill's aftermath have been eased as part of President Donald Trump's drive to boost U.S. oil production. An oil industry data reviewed by the Associated Press shows the number of safety inspection visits has declined in recent years, although officials say checks of electronic records, safety systems and individual oil rig components have increased.

Today, companies are increasingly reliant on production from deeper and inherently more dangerous oil reserves, where drill crews can grapple with ultra-high pressures and oil temperatures that can top 350 degrees.

After the spill, oil giants created the Marine Well Containment Co., which has equipment and vessels ready to respond if another major spill occurs. As wells close to shore run dry, the average drilling depth in



GERALD HERBERT/AP

The Deepwater Horizon oil rig burns April 21, 2010, in the Gulf of Mexico more than 50 miles southeast of Venice on Louisiana's tip.

deeper waters steadily increased, from about 3,500 feet beneath the surface in 1999 to more than 4,600 feet in 2019, according to AP analysis of data from the U.S. Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

Drilling deeper makes well sites harder to reach in a blowout or other accident.

In the past year, the industry began producing crude from ultra-high pressure reserves in the Gulf, where well pressures can top 20,000 pounds per square inch, much more than Deepwater Horizon.

"Higher risk, higher pressure, higher temperatures, more reliance on technology — it's just a tougher environment to operate in," said Lois Epstein, a Wilderness Society civil engineer who

served on a government advisory committee formed to improve drilling safety after the spill.

Inspection visits by the government's safety bureau fell from 4,712 in 2013 to 3,717 in 2019, according to data reviewed by AP. The decline coincided with increased focus on higher risk facilities, including those with historical problems.

Industry representatives contend fewer inspections do not automatically mean less effective oversight. Inspectors are less interested now about technical violations and are trying to make sure comprehensive safety systems are in place to handle major accidents, said Erik Milto, president of the National Ocean Industries Association, an oil trade group.

Warmest oceans on record could set off a year of extreme weather

By BRIAN K. SULLIVAN
Bloomberg News

BOSTON — The world's seas are simmering, with record high temperatures spurring worry among forecasters that the global warming effect may generate a chaotic year of extreme weather ahead.

Parts of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans all hit the record books for warmth last month, according to the U.S. National Centers for Environmental Information. The high temperatures could offer clues on the ferocity of the Atlantic hurricane season, the eruption of wildfires from the Amazon region to Australia, and whether the record heat and severe thunderstorms raking the southern U.S. will continue.

In the Gulf of Mexico, where offshore drilling accounts for about 17% of U.S. oil output, water temperatures were 76.3 degrees Fahrenheit, 1.7 degrees above the long-term average, said Phil Klotzbach at Colorado State University. If Gulf waters stay warm, it could be the fuel that intensifies any storm that comes that way, Klotzbach said.

"The entire tropical ocean is above average," said Michelle L'Heureux, a forecaster at the U.S. Climate Prediction Center. "And there is a global warming component to that. It is really amazing when you look at all the tropical oceans and see how warm they are."

The record warm water in the Gulf of Mexico spilled over into every coastal community along the shoreline with all-time high temperatures on land, said Deke Arndt, chief of the monitoring section at the National Centers

for Environmental Information in Asheville, N.C. Florida recorded its warmest March on record, and Miami reached 93 degrees Wednesday, a record for the date and 10 degrees above normal, according to the National Weather Service.

Overall, the five warmest years in the world's seas, as measured by modern instruments, have occurred over just the last half-dozen or so years. It's "definitely climate-change related," said Jennifer Francis, a senior scientist at the Woods Hole Research Center in Massachusetts. "Oceans are absorbing about 90% of the heat trapped by extra greenhouse gases."

Worldwide, sea temperatures were 1.49 degrees Fahrenheit above average in March. That's the second highest level recorded since 1880 for the month of March, according to U.S. data. In 2016, temperatures were 1.55 degrees above average.

The first of Colorado State's 2020 storm reports, led by Klotzbach, forecast this year that eight hurricanes could spin out of the Atlantic with an above-average chance at least one will make landfall in the U.S. during the six-month season starting June 1. The U.S. is set to issue its hurricane forecast next month.

The searing global temperatures this year can also be traced back to intense climate systems around the Arctic that bottled up much of that region's cold, preventing it from spilling south into temperate regions. Combined with global warming, this was a one-two punch for sea temperatures that's brought them to historic highs.

WORLD

UN experts: Blacklist 14 ships for violating North Korea sanctions

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — U.N. experts have recommended blacklisting 14 vessels for violating sanctions against North Korea in a report that accuses the country of increasing illegal coal exports, imports of petroleum products and continuing with cyber attacks on financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges to gain illicit revenue.

The 267-page report, obtained Saturday by The Associated Press, also accused North Korea of importing luxury vehicles, watches and liquor and other sanctioned items including robotic machinery, and continuing to illegally access international banking channels "mainly by using third party intermediaries."

The U.N. Security Council has imposed increasingly tough sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the country's official name, including banning most of its exports and

severely limiting its imports, to pressure Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

The full report by the panel of experts monitoring the sanctions provides more details to the summary and some excerpts reported by AP in February. It includes photos of ballistic missile launchers, nuclear sites and vessels recommended for blacklisting.

The panel made 39 recommendations to the Security Council, including on the blacklisting of 14 vessels.

It said one vessel is registered in Sierra Leone and six were previously registered in the West African nation. Two are North Korean, one is Chinese, one Vietnamese, one was formerly registered in Togo, one was formerly registered in St. Kitts and Nevis, and the flag of one is unknown. China has been North Korea's largest trading partner and has been considered critical to enforcing U.N. sanctions.

Eastern Congo flooding kills at least 25

Associated Press

BENI, Congo — About 25 people have been killed by flooding in eastern Congo, a local official said Saturday.

The administrator of Uvira territory in South Kivu province, Kiza Muhato, told The Associated Press that the search continued for bodies.

Muhato said about 45 other people were injured and about 3,500 homes were destroyed when the

Mulungwe river flooded in Uvira city Friday. The administrator called for urgent help from aid groups and volunteers.

Mathias Gillmann, spokesman for the U.N. mission in Congo, told the AP they were working with local authorities to provide support, particularly drinking water.

An engineering team has been working since Friday to repair two destroyed bridges so that humanitarian aid can be delivered.

US condemns Hong Kong's arrests of democracy activists

By ZEN SOO

Associated Press

HONG KONG — The United States condemned the arrests of at least 14 veteran pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong on charges of joining massive anti-government protests last year, saying the police action jeopardizes a high degree of autonomy guaranteed the southern Chinese city.

The sweeping crackdown amid a coronavirus pandemic is based on charges of unlawful assembly stemming from huge rallies against proposed China extradition legislation that exposed deep divisions between democracy-minded Hong Kongers and the Communist Party-ruled central government in Beijing.

The bill — which would have allowed the residents of the semi-autonomous Chinese territory to be sent to the mainland to stand trial — has been withdrawn, but the protests continued for more than seven months, centered around demands for voting rights and an independent inquiry into police conduct.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a statement condemned the arrests.

"Beijing and its representatives in Hong Kong continue to take actions inconsistent with commitments made under the Sino-British Joint Declaration that include transparency, the rule of law, and guarantees that Hong Kong will continue to 'enjoy a high degree of autonomy,'" Pompeo said. He was referring to the 1997 handover of the former British colony to China, which promised the city would enjoy political freedoms



KIN CHEUNG/AP

Former pro-democracy lawmaker Martin Lee, 81, right, leaves a police station Saturday in Hong Kong. Hong Kong police arrested at least 14 pro-democracy lawmakers and activists on Saturday on charges of joining unlawful protests last year.

not afforded mainland China.

Britain's Foreign Office also criticized the arrests, saying "the right to peaceful protest is fundamental to Hong Kong's way of life and as such is protected in both the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law."

The Office of the Commissioner of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Hong Kong said police were enforcing the law against those suspected of organizing and participating in unauthorized assemblies, and foreign countries have no right to interfere, China's official

Xinhua News Agency reported. "It is completely wrong that the U.K. Foreign Office spokesman has distorted the truth by painting unauthorized assemblies as 'peaceful protests,' in a bid to whitewash, condone and exonerate the anti-China troublemakers in Hong Kong," the statement said.

Hong Kong authorities had denied permission for most of the rallies and police increasingly used tear gas and pepper spray against demonstrators, arresting hundreds.

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WORLD

Year later, virus halts Notre Dame recovery

By ELAINE GANLEY
Associated Press

PARIS — Notre Dame Cathedral stands crippled and isolated, locked in a dangerous web of warped metal scaffolding one year after a devastating fire gutted its interior, toppled its famous spire and horrified the world.

Some of the 40,000 bars — erected for an earlier renovation project — melted in the intense blaze on April 15, 2019. The unstable scaffolding now endangers the Gothic jewel that for many embodies the soul of France.

The restoration of the landmark from the 12th and 13th centuries has been halted and the workers sent home because of France's coronavirus lockdown that began March 17, thwarting plans to start removing the 250 tons of scaffolding.

So even Notre Dame has been left in isolation by the pandemic that has affected so many people across France.

But its 13-ton bell in the south tower, named Emmanuel, sounded at 8 p.m. Wednesday. A man wearing a mask and white protective clothing pulled a rope attached to its enormous clapper. The sounding of the bell joined the nightly applause from balconies to honor overstrained health workers.

On Good Friday, Paris Archbishop Michel Aupetit led an exceptional but tiny gathering inside the church, at the foot of the huge golden cross that remains intact.

"Today, we stand in this half-fallen cathedral to say that life is still here," Aupetit said in the televised ceremony.

The gathering in the fragile church was meant to raise the spirits of a nation in distress.

"The message of hope is especially important for our compatriots at a time when we are particularly affected by the coronavirus, which is sowing anguish and death," the archbishop told reporters.

There was no Easter service and no formal plans to mark the anniversary of the fire. But the musicians of Notre Dame have created a virtual homage to their beloved cathedral with a performance from their homes of an extract of J.S. Bach's "St. John Passion."

"As long as we have this scaffolding around, there's still sort of a 50% chance that more damage can be (caused) to the cathedral," said Notre Dame chaplain Brice de Malherbe, who last year was



MICHEL EULER/AP

A man wears a mask to protect against the spread of the coronavirus as he walks past the Notre Dame cathedral in Paris on April 13. The reconstruction of the fire-devastated Notre Dame Cathedral was suspended last month due to the pandemic.

evacuated from his home next door as flames engulfed the roof.

French President Emmanuel Macron reiterated Wednesday his desire to see the cathedral reopen its giant doors in time for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris.

"We will do everything to keep this deadline," he said in a tweeted video, thanking firefighters and rescue workers for extinguishing the blaze and saving lives.

Notre Dame "is a symbol of our resilience, our capacity to overcome challenges and stand upright," Macron said.

But progress has been delayed by setbacks, from the discovery of toxic dust from the melted lead roof and spire to the health

and safety demands of the pandemic.

For one fervent devotee of Notre Dame, the barricades, which replaced a smaller barrier, symbolize her loss, and the virus spreading across France and the world.

"Notre Dame is confined. I couldn't throw a bouquet of flowers over to her," said Cecile Deleville, who had tossed one over the lower fence in December. "It's as though they took that away, too."

The 67-year-old retiree dared to take her first look at the cathedral a day after the fire, along with reporters from The Associated Press. She said at the time that she felt like an orphan.

Now, she fears she won't see Notre Dame

reborn in her lifetime. Deleville worries that the reconstruction will fall by the wayside as France tries to rebuild its economy once the virus crisis has been overcome.

Those in charge of returning Notre Dame to its original splendor are still at work, despite being locked down.

The cathedral "has been gravely injured, undeniably so," Jean-Louis Georgelin, a retired army general appointed by Macron to head the restoration project, said in an interview with the Catholic publication *Le Pelerin*.

But it has resisted thermal shock from the fire, water from hoses that drenched it for days, the summer heat and high winds, he said, adding that sensors installed to read any movement of the structure have picked up nothing notable.

Donations large and small are helping to pay for the restoration, with 188 million euros received, Georgelin told the daily *Le Parisien*. Some \$437 million have been promised by the Total oil company and French tycoons Francois Pinault and Bernard Arnault of the luxury giant LVMH. But it was the modest donations, mainly from people in France and the United States, that covered the initial costs.

On Wednesday, Germany offered to help rebuild some of the large clerestory windows located far above eye level. The German government said three glass-makers that conduct restoration work for cathedrals in Germany could offer "great expertise" to their French colleagues.

A timeline for the reconstruction may need to be redrawn to account for the virus lockdown. What also is unclear is what the new spire will look like. Will it be a copy of architect Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's 19th-century creation in lead that soared 315 feet high, or be a contemporary version?



THIAULT CANUS/AP

Flames rise from Notre Dame cathedral as it burns in Paris on April 15, 2019.



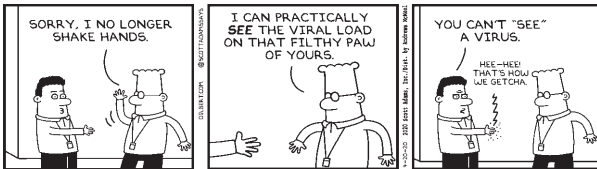
CHRISTOPHE PETIT TESSON, POOL/AP

A hole is seen in the dome inside the damaged Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on April 16, 2019.

Frazz



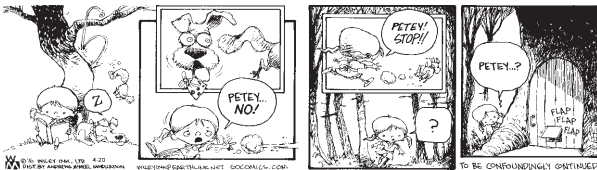
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



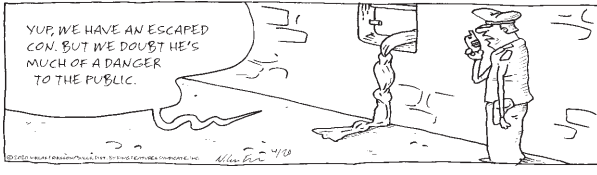
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19				20			
			21				22		23			
24	25	26					27		28		29	30
31					32				33		34	
35			36		37				38			
			39		40		41					
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49						50			51			
52						53			54			
55						56			57			

ACROSS

- Zealous group
- Observe
- Crop-growing tract
- Culture medium
- Web address
- "Superfood" berry
- Too
- Protective glass cases
- Blockhead
- Tolerates
- Jug handles
- Sault — Marie
- Prison roomie
- "So be it"
- Glamorous Gardner
- Amtrak express
- de-France
- Gambling mecca
- Revealing
- French vineyard
- Teeming
- "Good grief!"
- Bamboo eaters
- Good health
- Prescribed amount
- Big fusses
- "Exodus" hero
- Oil cartel
- Memory unit

- Insult, slangily
- Tidy

DOWN

- "Misery" star James
- Hybrid fruit
- Endure
- Mason's tool
- Take away
- Before connector
- Jazzy Fitzgerald
- Tex-Mex treat
- College life
- Scarce
- Overlook
- Ton fractions
- Lettuces unit
- Clear the decks?
- Screen star
- Lamar
- Blockhead
- On the briny
- Denomination
- Lanka lead-in

Answer to Previous Puzzle

AL	TO	S	C	LE	V	E	R
F	L	O	R	E	T	H	U
A	G	L	A	R	E	A	C
B	A	L	M	E	P	I	C
A	M	A	V	I	P	S	I
G	A	R	D	E	N	P	A
T	R	I	O	G	I	V	E
Z	O	E	E	A	S	Y	
S	N	O	A	S	S	N	U
P	I	N	A	T	A	N	A
O	K	A	P	I	S	A	R
T	E	N	O	N	S	H	A

4-20

CRYPTOQUIP

UIMAD VEIFZ XDCDXINMDG

XSI WIUD IFZ VZ YABSZ VYL

ZIX V XVH DMDCHEILH'G

WVCG: "ZSD SVFNAYB."

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WHAT WOULD SOMEBODY CALL A PORCH WITH STEPS IN FRONT OF SINGER GLEN'S HOUSE? CAMPBELL'S STOOP.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals W

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Voyeur doctor arrested; hid camera in bathroom

VT BURLINGTON — Investigators in Vermont said a doctor hid a camera in a staff bathroom, and police found a large amount of videos that constitute voyeurism.

Eike Blohm of South Burlington was arrested on multiple charges of voyeurism, WCAX-TV reported.

Police told WCAX-TV the investigation is still going on.

Blohm is an emergency physician at UVM Medical Center. The medical center said its staff "did the right thing and contacted the Burlington Police Department, who immediately responded and conducted an investigation with our cooperation, and with support from our security team." Blohm is on administrative leave, the center said.

K-9 officer captures man wanted for murder

TN MEMPHIS — A Tennessee man wanted for killing another man and wounding a juvenile outside a convenience store was arrested after being confronted by a K-9 officer, authorities said.

Curdareon Wilson was captured after escaping from authorities three times for different crimes, a U.S. Marshals press release said.

Memphis police were called to a store on April 6, where they found a man, Raymond Howard, fatally shot as well as a juvenile who was suffering from a gunshot wound to the top of her head, news outlets reported.

After Wilson was found more than a week later, he fled, first in a car and then on foot, the release said. Marshals sent K-9 Echo after Wilson, and he was tracked to a crawlspace inside an abandoned home, the release said.

Echo bit Wilson multiple times, and he later left the crawlspace, authorities said.

High school students expelled for racist video

GA CARROLLTON — Two high school students in Georgia were expelled after they posted a racist video on a social media site.

Carrollton City Schools Superintendent Dr. Mark Albertus said in a statement the students' "behavior was unacceptable and is not representative of the district's respect for all people."

"The racist behavior observed in the video easily violates this standard. They are no longer students in Carrollton High School."

A video posted first on TikTok and then shared on Twitter shows two teenagers using racial slurs and making derogatory remarks about black people.

Man reported missing found in closed mine

WV WILLIAMSON — A man reported missing more than a week ago was found alive in a closed West Virginia mine, state officials.



STEPHANIE ZOLSHAN, THE BERKSHIRE (MASS.) EAGLE/AP

Birthday honk

Bernice Plantier sits outside her home Friday, her 104th birthday, receiving well wishes, honks, waves, and a few gifts handed through car windows in Pittsfield, Mass. Because of the threat of COVID-19, Plantier could not have a party, so her family decorated the lawn in her honor and invited friends and family to drive by and wish her a happy birthday.

The West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training said the man was found in a Mingo County mine, where he apparently became lost after trespassing.

Timothy Kennedy, 26, was reported missing April 9 by a family member. An investigation led to the Gilbert-area mine, which last produced coal in 2011, the agency said.

Kennedy was located more than a half-mile from the mine entrance and taken to a hospital for evaluation.

Route 66 visitor center to display historic sign

NM ALBUQUERQUE — The weathered old sign that once served as a beacon to travelers along a stretch of Route 66 just outside of New Mexico's largest city was taken down and will be preserved as part of an initiative to build a visitor center dedicated to the historic roadway, officials said.

The Mountain Lodge Motel sign will remain in storage until the new venue is ready. Albuquerque city officials called it a piece of history, saying its preservation will help provide a greater understanding of Route 66 for future generations.

The Mountain Lodge sign was donated by Owen St. Germain, who was close to having it demolished after he bought the property on the eastern edge of Albuquerque to build a home.

THE CENSUS

1,400

a rural area, about 20 miles south of Gary, Chicago-based Invenery proposed the farm to produce enough electricity for more than 40,000 homes. Construction is scheduled to start in 2022, with the farm becoming operational in 2024.

The sign had sat along Route 66 since the 1940s. The motor lodge had been converted into an apartment complex and then was destroyed by fire in 2014.

Theater closed by virus puts movies online

SC — A South Carolina theater that's closed because of the coronavirus is making a switch to showing movies online.

Larry Mann and his wife have owned the Park Plaza Cinema on Hilton Head Island for more than a decade. Like other movie theaters in the U.S., they've had to shut down amid efforts to prevent the new virus from spreading.

The Island Packet reported that the couple revamped the theater's website to stream films not yet available on platforms such as Netflix. Mann says streaming movies on his site will generally cost about \$12.

"If we could figure out how to get everyone popcorn, we would do that, too," Mann said.

The number of acres of a planned solar energy farm in northwestern Indiana that won the backing of local officials. The Lake County Council voted 6-1 to support a zoning change that would allow construction of the project in

Virgin Orbit conducts last test before launch

CA MOJAVE — Virgin Orbit said it has conducted its final major test before an upcoming demonstration of its system in which a rocket slung beneath the wing of a Boeing 747 will be carried aloft and launched.

The jumbo jet took off from Mojave and successfully conducted a simulated drop before returning to the airport, the company said.

The date of the demonstration launch has not been released. Headquartered in Long Beach, Virgin Orbit is a sister company to Virgin Galactic. It intends to launch small satellites into space from locations around the world.

More rare whales prompt new protections

MA BOSTON — Federal ocean managers asked mariners to slow down east of Boston because of a new sighting of rare whales in the area.

Private citizens found an aggregation of North Atlantic right whales in the area. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said it is asking mariners to go around the area or travel through it at 10 knots or less until April 24.

Right whales number only about 400 and are one of the rarest large ocean animals.

The whales are moving along the East Coast at the moment and NOAA is asking boaters and fishermen to take steps to avoid harming them.

Plane makes emergency landing on interstate

OH CINCINNATI — A small plane made an emergency landing on an interstate highway in Cincinnati, but no injuries were reported, authorities said.

The pilot was the only person aboard the single-engine Beechcraft Bonanza plane that came down in the northbound lanes of Interstate 75 near the Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway. The plane did not hit any vehicles and eventually came to rest against a concrete barrier, police said.

It wasn't immediately clear where the plane had departed from, but officials said the pilot was headed to Lunken Airport in Cincinnati when he reported a loss of engine power. It's not yet known what caused the issue.

From wire reports

FACES

He can relate

Marc Maron, who currently has a comedy special on Netflix, knows what it's like to freak out.

NETFLIX/TNS



'Recovered hypochondriac' Marc Maron offers tips on how to manage your fears

By JEANETTE MARANTOS
Los Angeles Times

Marc Maron has a potty mouth, yes, and he's certainly irreverent ("I'm not a God guy"), but the prolific comedian, actor and "WTF" podcaster who interviewed President Barack Obama in his Los Angeles garage is also a 20-year-sober "re-covering hypochondriac" with solid advice for getting through a pandemic.

"I have learned over time, if you don't feel well, you should just wait," Maron said April 6 as he paced in his kitchen during a phone interview. "If you're not coughing up blood or have a horrible fever or some other physically compromised condition, just wait a couple days and see what happens."

Maron, whose new "End Times Fun" comedy special is streaming on Netflix, has pretty good cred as a hypochondriac, which he defines as "someone who decides they're sick and commits to it, with limited or no evidence. It's like, 'I got dizzy, so I must have MS.'"

There are some provisos, however. "In a time of plague, if you cough and think you have it, that's not hypochondria, that's fear, and there are plenty of reasons to be afraid."

Maron's explicit riff about how he was "cured" of hypochondria in his 20s starts with a personal explanation: "My father was a doctor, which means I was a hypochondriac. How else are you going to get their attention?"

The cure? After Maron made multiple visits to a urologist friend of his father's, insisting he had prostate cancer (as a sophomore in college) and then herpes (though he'd never had sex), the doctor looked up from Maron's penis and said, "There's nothing here, Marc. Do you like coming here?"

Maron said he had a clarifying moment — with the urologist's help — "of realizing it's ridiculous."

It's a whole belief thing, Maron said. "People can believe things they know are probably not true, because it makes them feel better. ... There's some kind of frightened-child element to it, and the tools you need to fix it are some kind

of positive and rational self-parenting. Somebody in your mind has to say, 'You're probably OK. If it gets worse, we'll go to the doctor, but right now, let's relax, have some tea and a good night's rest.'"

So did he turn to hypochondria to get his busy father's attention?

"Absolutely," Maron said. "It's always about attention and reassurance. You can work yourself into a frenzy of panic and terror ... I have gone to the doctor because my hands were tingling, dizziness, inability to breathe, things I saw on my skin, muscular problems, gas that wouldn't stop ... and I can tell you, a lot of times whatever you're experiencing is going to pass."

The trick is finding the reassurance you need to know that you're OK, he said, "because if you try hard enough, you can manifest the symptoms of most things by just obsessing."

But in times like these, when a deadly virus could be lurking on a grocery shelf, Maron said it's harder to find that calm.

"I get hung on this idea sometimes, how to weigh reassurance, because there is a point where you're not going to be OK. That moment happens for everybody. So when people go, 'You're going to be all right, I always think in the other side of my head, 'That's going to run out.'"

So how to deal with your legitimate fear during a pandemic?

Maron said he goes for runs and keeps busy holed up at home, where he records his "WTF" podcasts twice a week. Podcasts have been deemed essential services, he said, but they've become more complicated during the lockdown.

Maron said he's never done a phone interview in his 1,200 podcasts, because "talking in person is better."

"There's a quality to a face-to-face conversation that cannot be captured in any mediated fashion," he added.

But after three uncomfortable face-to-face social distancing interviews in his studio garage ("We were both afraid; it was kind of intense"), he did his first platform interview two weeks ago using Squadcast, so he could see his guests and have quality audio as they talked.

Maron's advice on how to cope

Listen to health professionals

"Pick a source of information coming from reasonable scientific people, which means you can't really listen to a particular bunch of political leaders. There's no leadership from the government; it's constant chaos. You have to figure out the most scientific, rational way to handle this."

"Don't become one of those belligerent, conspiracy-hoarding group of citizens saying, 'You can't tell us what to do.' Even if we are overreacting, this is one of those times you err on the side of caution. Don't get all ... childish because you want to go to Fridays for your happy hour."

Take a breath

"If you have a 104 fever and can't breathe, go to the hospital. But if you think you've got it because you have a little cough in the morning? You just have to wait it out a little bit."

"If you're going to worry, worry about overtaxing this health care system. Preventative medicine is the best. Get your physical every year, eat properly and maintain a certain amount of fitness. Most people don't even get their ... annual checkups, but now they have a cough and they need to see a doctor? People sit around and take turmeric and vitamin C, but they won't go see a doctor once a year for a physical? What are they afraid of?"

Learn the Serenity Prayer

"There's a lot of immaturity and fear, because everybody is trying to have some control over something they don't have any control over. I'm not a God guy, but the serenity prayer is a powerful idea — 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference' — because what do you really have control over?"

Pitbull hopes song encourages his fans

Pitbull is looking to uplift his fans around the world with a new dance anthem.

The singer has teamed up with the Saban Music Group to release "I Believe That We Will Win" in the hope of turning the word fear into a positive.

"Fear is either you can forget everything and run, or you can face everything and rise," said the Grammy-winner, who is among the hundreds of artists who have canceled or postponed concerts due to the coronavirus.

One hundred percent of the proceeds from the single will go to the charities Feeding America and the Tony Robbins Foundation.



Pitbull

Taylor Swift cancels all events for 2020

Taylor Swift is canceling the rest of her performances and appearances for the year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"With many events throughout the world already canceled, and upon direction from health officials in an effort to keep fans safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19, sadly the decision has been made to cancel all Taylor Swift live appearances and performances this year," Swift's representative said in a statement released April 17.

The statement said Swift's U.S. and Brazil shows will take place next year, and that tickets for canceled shows will transfer to new show dates. The new dates will be announced later.

Prolific stage, screen actor Denney dies

Brian Denney, the burly actor who started in films as a macho heavy and later in his career won plaudits for his stage work in plays by William Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov, Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller, died Wednesday of natural causes. He was 81.

Known for his broad frame, booming voice and ability to play good guys and bad guys with equal aplomb, Denney won two Tony Awards, a Golden Globe, a Laurence Olivier Award and was nominated for six Emmys. He was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 2010.

Among his 40-odd films, he played a sheriff who jailed Rambo in "First Blood," a serial killer in "To Catch a Killer," and a corrupt sheriff gunned down by Kevin Kline in "Silverado."

Denney eventually wearied of the studio life. "Movies used to be fun," he observed in an interview. "They took care of you, first-class. Those days are gone."



Denney, in 2006

From The Associated Press

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OPINION

Whitmer may have just taken herself out of the running

By HENRY OLSEN

The Washington Post

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer probably wishes she had a time machine right now. A media darling who was sporting sky-high approval ratings because of her handling of the state's coronavirus crisis, she was touted as a potential running mate for presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden. Last Wednesday's massive anti-Whitmer demonstrations, however, could take her out of the running.

Whitmer was someone sharp politics were already looking at before COVID-19 changed everything. The 48-year-old governor had spent 14 years in the Michigan state legislature, rising to become the Senate Democratic leader before term limits forced her to leave office. She easily won her party's nomination for governor in 2018 and then swept to a comfortable win in the fall, defeating Democratic Attorney General Bill Schuette, by nearly 10 points. She solidified her status as a rising star by giving the Democratic response to President Donald Trump's State of the Union address this year.

The demonstrations, however, substantially dim that glow. They arose almost overnight after Whitmer signed an executive order tightening the state's already strict lockdown regime. It closed sections of stores dedicated to plant nurseries and garden centers, a strange decision given that spring is prime planting season and would be a welcome diversion for people stuck at home. Landscapers and lawn

mowing services were also ordered to shut down, even though that means many Michiganders will be unable to mow their lawns as the spring growing season gets underway. A public that had largely gone along with her first stay-at-home order burst into anger.

Whitmer's decision was particularly tone-deaf because it covered the entire state, even though most of it remains largely unaffected by the COVID-19 outbreak. More than 80% of the state's deaths and confirmed cases were in the Detroit metropolitan area as of Thursday morning, and that share is higher when counties close to Detroit are added to the count. Yet the order applied to the entire state even though residents in most regions face little risk from the disease. No wonder people drove from all over Michigan to the up Lansing's traffic Wednesday.

This isn't the first time Whitmer has displayed poor judgment. Her campaign slogan, even though it was not in her initial proposal to do that was a 45-cent-per-gallon gas tax hike. That idea would have given Michigan the highest gas taxes in the nation and come on top of mandated increases in the gas tax and vehicle registration fees that had been approved just years earlier. Whitmer said her proposal would cost the average driver \$276 a year, meaning a two-car household would have paid over \$500 a year more regardless of their income. Her idea predictably went nowhere in the legislature and contributed to Whitmer's job approval rating dropping to a mere 43.3% by January 2020.

Biden may want to shy away from put-

ting Whitmer on the ticket, given the high expectations he has expressed for what his vice president will do. Biden has said he would "turn over presidential responsibility" on key issues to his deputy. At Biden's age — he would be 78 when he is to take office next January, making him the oldest president in history — people are likely to look more closely at his running mate than they normally would. Whitmer's political tin ear would be fodder for Trump's campaign, a distraction that Biden surely does not want.

Talented politicians often make mistakes when they rise to new heights relatively quickly. In Ronald Reagan's first year as California governor, he reversed course to sign a then-record tax hike. Bill Clinton's job approval similarly plummeted to a mere 37% within five months of his taking the presidential oath of office. Both men obviously recovered from their early stumbles, and Whitmer could, too. But the risk she won't could be too great for Biden to take. He will want to keep the focus on Trump, not on his running mate's tax hikes and outbursts.

Biden's best hope of beating Trump is for his ticket to be perceived as potentia- like, an inoffensive but nutritious staple when compared to the spicy and polarizing Trump. Wednesday's protests might just ensure Whitmer can't pass the politeness test. She may need to spend a few more years in Lansing learning her craft before she re-enters the national conversation.

Henry Olsen is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Amid a pandemic, the calming power of a simple walk

By ERIN SAGEN

Special to The Washington Post

The wind has bite, but the sun is high and indiscreet here in this early-spring day. Tree blocks from the local high school, the usual choke of cars that idle on my street at 3 o'clock has disappeared, as has the noise that blasted from them. On the sidewalk, groups of teens who regularly pade loudly toward town can't be heard. So much of the daily rhythm made by cars and the city has stopped, and it's left a quiet that is both reassuring and unsettling to those of us who go for daily walks. But the walks themselves still bring comfort, if not because the world is quieter, then at least in response to its unrelenting silence.

We've needed that for weeks here in the Seattle area, where the U.S. outbreak first emerged and where I live. The spread of the coronavirus has forced the temporary closure of schools, businesses and institutions, and state and city governments have ordered the public to shelter in place. Traffic has slowed on boulevards and sidewalks. But this doesn't mean that Americans aren't leaving their homes.

In the days after shutdowns began to sweep the nation, visitors flooded national parks, forcing some to close temporarily to protect staff. Over a March weekend in the Seattle area, hundreds of people crowded the sidewalks. But this doesn't mean that Americans aren't leaving their homes.

In Britain, the government announced a sweeping nationwide lockdown that restricted outdoor exercise to only once a day, and police were granted the authority to enforce these rules. France declared a two-month state of emergency, imposing still stricter rules: Residents could go outside for up to one hour to complete es-

sential tasks and exercise within only a half-mile of their homes, but they needed an official form to justify their outings. In states like Washington and California, measures to flatten the curve have been comparatively less aggressive but nonetheless have involved shutting down all nonessential services and mandating residents to stay home.

Who would have thought, just a few weeks ago, that going for a walk would become such a luxury? Not everyone has the physical ability to walk, it's important to note, nor does everyone live in a community where walking is a safe, even feasible option. That was true before the pandemic, and it's true still. But now, those of us who can get outside and walk, should, and not just because of the well-known health benefits, like lowering blood pressure and improved sleep. (Although who wouldn't appreciate some better sleep these days?)

I started going for neighborhood walks when I lived in Chapel Hill, N.C. At 27, I had moved there for journalism school and had arrived from Seattle with plenty of grief and anger about the streets and the world. My beloved grandmother had died earlier that year, and I was transferring into my program as a first-generation college student, 3,000 miles away from my friends and family. I felt alone and hopeless. But it was a pivotal time for self-growth. Only after being alone and without a sense of going for evening walks, just to get out of my apartment, did the gloom begin to lift.

Chapel Hill was not what I'd call a pedestrian-friendly town. But on paved trails I strolled. Along quiet residential curbs, I released my mind and let it wander. I paused at a bench to take a breath, and I talked to commuters in their cars, gardeners in their yards. Without fully realizing it, my soul was connecting to something else, something larger than me: a sense of community perhaps, or a deep gratitude for the nature all around me, which grew and died and grew back again without a sense of scarcity or existential terror that had been

haunting me. Exercise seemed irrelevant; it was more about finding space to contain all my wild emotions.

Walking sets our minds free, says Irish neuroscientist and "In Praise of Walking" author Shane O'Mara, at least in the moments we're doing it. "Walking can allow you to escape yourself, and this non-go focus is healthy. We should spend more time not thinking of ourselves," he told Irish Times last year.

I have definitely felt liberated from the chaos of thoughts while walking, even in Chapel Hill, where sidewalks and abruptly and the only thing separating you from cars is a small stretch of pavement.

In Europe, walking isn't just a way of escape but a way of life in most cities, where they were designed and built centuries before automobiles came along. Take Paris, a world city that is demographically flat but geographically tiny at roughly only six miles across. The city proper has about 56,000 people living per square mile, about twice as much as New York City, which has about 28,000 people per square mile. Getting to and from the city center is a daily drive, but Parisians also have a strong sense of pride in their pedestrian culture. For instance, after decades of increasing car use, as well as growing pollution and traffic, a concerted effort was taken by city government to "deconstruct" city streets, to reclaim them for walkers and cyclists, and it's been successful: Since 1990, driving has dropped about 45% and cycling has increased tenfold.

Today in the U.S., walking is framed as an acceptable form of exercise, one of the few ways Americans can do outside of their homes. It's never felt core to who we are as Americans. But at least we're still allowed to do it, even encouraged by some. Maybe right now, we can get out and take a stroll and appreciate it for the simple escape it gifts us. Just keep six feet of distance — and leave your worries at home.

Erin Sagen is a freelance journalist based in Seattle who covers women, health and culture.

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Deals

Saturday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
ATLANTA FALCONS — Signed RB Brian Hill to his fifth-round tender.
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Agreed to terms with LB Jake Ryan on a one-year contract.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Waived LB Jake Carlisle, LB Jamal Davis II, WR Andy Jones, CB Linden Stephens, DT Gerald Willis and WR Terry Wright.
National Hockey League
LOS ANGELES KINGS — Signed G Jacob Ingham to a three-year entry-level contract.

Pro basketball

NBA					
EASTERN CONFERENCE					
Atlantic Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Toronto	46	18	.719	—	
Boston	43	21	.672	3	
Brooklyn	39	26	.600	7½	
New York	30	34	.469	16	
Southeast Division					
Miami	41	24	.631	—	
Orlando	40	25	.612	11	
Washington	24	40	.375	18½	
Charlotte	22	43	.338	18	
Atlanta	20	47	.299	22	
Central Division					
Milwaukee	33	12	.815	—	
Indiana	39	26	.600	14	
Chicago	32	43	.338	31	
Detroit	20	46	.303	33½	
Cleveland	19	49	.282	34	
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
Southwest Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Houston	40	24	.625	—	
Memphis	30	27	.527	11½	
San Antonio	32	33	.492	8½	
Portland	29	36	.443	12	
San Antonio	27	36	.429	12½	
Northwest Division					
Denver	49	22	.662	—	
Utah	41	23	.641	1½	
Oklahoma City	34	24	.585	2½	
Portland	29	37	.438	14½	
Minnesota	27	39	.407	23½	
Pacific Division					
L.A. Lakers	49	14	.778	—	
L.A. Clippers	44	20	.688	5½	
Sacramento	28	36	.438	21½	
Phoenix	16	40	.242	34	
Golden State	15	50	.231	35	
All games postponed at least until mid-May					

Pro soccer

MLS						
EASTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Atlanta	2	0	0	6	4	2
New York	2	0	1	4	4	3
Montreal	1	0	1	4	4	3
Toronto FC	1	0	1	4	3	2
Columbus	1	0	1	4	3	2
D.C. United	1	1	0	3	3	3
Chicago	1	1	0	3	3	3
New England	0	1	1	1	2	3
Orlando City	0	1	1	1	1	2
Philadelphia	0	1	1	1	1	1
Cincinnati	0	2	0	0	0	3
Inter Miami CF	0	2	0	0	0	1
New York City FC	0	2	0	0	0	2
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Sporting KC	2	0	0	6	7	1
Minnesota United	2	0	0	6	8	3
Colorado	2	0	0	6	4	4
FC Dallas	1	0	1	4	4	4
Los Angeles FC	1	0	1	4	4	2
Seattle	1	0	1	4	3	2
Portland	1	1	0	3	3	2
Vancouver	1	1	0	3	2	3
Real Salt Lake	0	2	2	1	1	1
L.A. Galaxy	0	1	1	1	4	7
San Jose	0	1	1	1	4	7
Houston	0	2	0	0	1	1
Nashville SC	0	2	0	0	1	3
All games postponed at least until mid-May						

Golf

PGA Tour			
Player	FedEx Cup Leaders	Money	
1. Sungjae Im	1,458	\$3,862,168	
2. Justin Thomas	1,408	\$3,422,177	
3. Rory McIlroy	1,179	\$3,832,721	
4. Brendon Todd	1,110	\$2,561,615	
5. Webb Simpson	1,083	\$2,751,300	

Adams rues timing of virus shutdown

By CIARAN FAHEY
 Associated Press

BERLIN — Tyler Adams picked the wrong time to be the fittest he's been all season.

With the Bundesliga suspended indefinitely due to the new coronavirus outbreak, the 21-year-old from Wappinger, N.Y., is unsure when he will be able to play a competitive game for Leipzig again or even whether the season will be completed.

Adams injured a groin in Leipzig's German Cup final loss to Bayern Munich last May 25 and did not come back until Dec. 21. He played five Bundesliga matches, then strained his left calf. He returned on March 10 to make his Champions League debut against Tottenham, setting up the last goal in Leipzig's 3-0 win.

But the team hasn't played since, and the Bundesliga doesn't know when the last nine rounds of games will be played.

"It's been a bit of a whirlwind," Adams said by video link on Friday.

He has been using the time off to complete what he calls his preseason, working on his fitness at home before training resumed in small groups at Leipzig's ground.

"I'm really building up to my full capability," Adams said. "Right now the body feels great. I feel fully recovered from any past injuries. My mental state is clear. I'm just focused on being able to play again."

Germany has strict social distancing measures in place. Training is in in groups of three or four — always while maintaining appropriate distance.

"It's a little bit tricky. You can only do certain passing drills. You can do dribbling, you can do running and fitness, finishing. So you have all the individual variables of what it's like to play in a game, but at the same time, it's never gonna be 11 vs. 11, right now," Adams said. "That's the thing that hurts."

New York has become a hotspot for the virus in the U.S. with more than 123,000 cases of COVID-19 registered and nearly 12,913 deaths through Saturday, according to Johns Hopkins.

Adams worries about his family back home, but said it was fortunate they live an hour and a half outside the city.

"It's not too, too bad there yet, but the num-



JENS MEYER/AP

Team USA soccer Tyler Adams controls the ball as a player for Leipzig during a German Bundesliga player match. Adams is among three 21-year-olds viewed as keys to the Team USA's hopes in the 2022 World Cup.

bers there are still increasing. It's a scary thing. My parents have my brothers at home with them, keeping them occupied, but right now they're safe," the player said. "It's hard. You miss your family, you hope everyone's safe."

Adams is among three 21-year-olds viewed as keys to the United States' hopes in the 2022 World Cup, joined by Chelsea's Christian Pulisic and Schalke's Weston McKennie. But they have played together just once with the national team because of injuries, in a March 2019 exhibition against Ecuador.

Adams joined Leipzig in January 2019 from Major League Soccer's New York Red Bulls and quickly established himself as a midfield starter. Despite Adams' injuries, Leipzig gave him a raise and last month extended his contract to 2025.

The season resumes. Leipzig is five points behind defending champion Bayern Munich.

Bundesliga clubs were hoping to return to play in May without spectators, but this week

the ban on large gatherings was extended to Aug. 31, affecting the start of next season, too.

Playing without fans wouldn't be a problem for Adams, thinking back to his games in 2015 and '16 for Red Bulls II in the then third-tier United Soccer League.

"There were a lot of empty stadiums at the time," he said. "Being able to go out and play would be a great feeling, but you only want to do so when it keeps everybody safe — all the players, all the staff involved in running games, and of course the fans. If we continue to play with no spectators, and that keeps them safe, then I would be glad to do that."

Adams is in regular contact with McKennie, Austria Vienna's Erik Palmer-Brown and other American players who are overseas.

"It's been unique to see what they're going through. For (Palmer-Brown) they haven't even had the opportunity to train again. They haven't even been able to leave the house for a run," Adams said. "Fortunately enough in Germany, we're still able to get out."

Spain set to finish soccer season without fans

By TALES AZZONI
 Associated Press

MADRID — Soccer matches and other sports events in Spain will take place in fan-free venues at least until the end of the summer, the mayor of Madrid said Saturday.

Jose Luis Martinez-Almeida told the Onda Cero radio station that the coronavirus pandemic likely "won't be under control" by then for events with big crowds to resume normally.

"In the spring and summer there won't be any events with crowds in Spain, and possibly not in the fall either," Martinez-Almeida said. "Because obviously the situation will not be fully under control. We will have to change our habits and behaviors even after being allowed to go back on to the streets."

Spain has been one of the hardest-hit countries with more than 190,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, only behind the United States. More than 20,000 have



PAUL WHITE/AP

Construction workers stand by Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. The mayor of Madrid said soccer and other sports will take place without fans until the end of summer.

died in the European nation.

The Spanish league is not expecting to resume at least until the end of May. It is working on several scenarios, including play-

ing without fans through the fall.

"Soccer matches without fans in the summer is a possibility, as long as health and safety conditions are observed," Martinez-

Almeida said.

The soccer federation said this week that if the league can't resume, it will use the current standings to decide the four clubs to play in the Champions League, which would mean giving the spots to Barcelona, Real Madrid, Sevilla and Real Sociedad.

The league has said the total losses for not finishing the season because of the pandemic could reach nearly \$1.1 billion. The losses if the league resumes with matches in empty stadiums would be about \$325 million, and if it restarts with fans it would be nearly \$163 million.

Martinez-Almeida also said it was a "mistake" for Atletico Madrid to play its Champions League game against Liverpool. Nearly 3,000 Atletico fans attended the game on March 11, just days before the Spanish government declared a state of emergency and established lockdown measures that are expected to remain in place at least until April 26.

HOCKEY



KATHY WILLEMS/AP

New Jersey Devils interim general manager Tom Fitzgerald is waiting to see if he'll have a job if and when the NHL returns to play this season.

On ice: Shutdown has Devils' Fitzgerald waiting on 2 fronts

By TOM CANAVAN
Associated Press

The suspension of play in the NHL because of the coronavirus pandemic has put Tom Fitzgerald of the New Jersey Devils in a strange situation.

The 51-year-old is waiting to see if the league will finish its season and whether he gets to keep his job.

Fitzgerald is the only interim general manager in the league. He took over Jan. 12, when Ray Shero was fired, and has guided the struggling Devils to a 12-8-5 record.

There are five others in the NHL also in limbo during this time of isolation. They are the league's interim coaches: Geoff Ward of the Calgary Flames, Alain Nasreddine of the Devils, Rick Bowness of the Dallas Stars, Bob Boughner of the San Jose Sharks, and Dean Evason of the Minnesota Wild.

"My job is to lead the hockey ops department until told otherwise," Fitzgerald said Thursday. "And that's all I'm trying to do right now is continue to do the job, not think of the what ifs, because I just think I can muddy the waters and distract an individual from thinking again, those whatever's."

Fitzgerald said Nasreddine, who has led the Devils to a 19-16-8 record since replacing John Hynes on Dec. 3, is doing the same thing. He is focusing on his job. Fitzgerald joked that while he has the interim tag, everybody in the NHL is in the same category. Fitzgerald has weekly discussions with team owners Josh Harris and David Blitzer. His job is to

NHL scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division									
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Boston	70	44	14	12	100	227	174		
Tampa Bay	70	43	21	6	92	245	195		
Toronto	70	36	25	9	81	238	227		
Florida	69	35	26	8	78	231	228		
Montreal	71	31	31	9	71	212	221		
Buffalo	69	30	31	8	68	195	217		
Ottawa	71	25	34	12	62	191	243		
Detroit	71	17	49	5	39	145	267		

Metropolitan Division										
Washington	69	41	20	8	90	240	215			
Philadelphia	69	41	21	7	89	232	196			
Pittsburgh	69	40	23	6	86	224	196			
Carolina	68	38	25	5	81	222	193			
Columbus	70	33	22	15	81	180	187			
N.Y. Islanders	68	35	23	10	80	192	193			
N.Y. Rangers	70	37	28	5	79	234	222			
New Jersey	69	28	29	12	68	189	230			

Western Conference

	Central Division						
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	71	42	19	10	94	225	193
Colorado	70	42	20	8	92	237	191
Dallas	69	37	24	8	82	180	177
Winnipeg	71	37	28	6	80	216	203
Nashville	69	35	26	8	78	215	217
Minnesota	69	35	27	7	77	220	220
Chicago	70	32	30	8	72	212	218

Pacific Division									
Vegas	71	39	24	8	86	227	211		
Edmonton	71	37	25	9	83	225	217		
Calgary	70	36	27	7	79	210	215		
Vancouver	69	36	27	6	78	228	217		
Arizona	70	33	29	8	74	195	187		
Anaheim	71	29	33	9	67	187	226		
Los Angeles	70	29	35	6	64	178	212		
San Jose	70	29	36	5	63	182	226		
All games postponed at least until early May.									

All games postponed at least until early May.

keep everyone on their toes. He has the scouts working on their talent evaluations and the players and coaches prepared to return.

"I've got an opportunity to grow as a manager," Fitzgerald said. "I feel really good about where I'm at and the job that I've done so far with the help of a lot of people in the organization. It takes a village to build success. Whether my future's here or not, the future is here until they tell me otherwise. And if that's the case of whatever,

I'll cross that bridge."

Of all the guys with the interim coaching tags, Ward might be in the best shape. He has led the Flames to a 24-15-3 mark since replacing Bill Peters on Nov. 26. They were in a playoff spot when the season was halted.

Flames general manager Brad Treveling said he has not made a decision on Ward's future.

"When you're uncertain about things, that's where you get anxiety," he said. "You're being a little naive if you think you have to have all the answers."

Sharks general manager Doug Wilson will decide Boughner's future after the season. He wants input from the players and his staff. Boughner was hurt by injuries and suspensions in posting a 14-20-3 record after replacing Peter DeBoer on Dec. 11.

"The things we were looking for, I thought were addressed," Wilson said. "Boughner and I have talked a lot about clarifying how we want to play, and ultimately getting you team to commit to playing the right way for longer periods of time regardless of your talent level."

Bowness has posted a 20-13-5 mark with the Stars since replacing Jim Montgomery on Dec. 10. Dallas was in third place and a playoff spot when play was halted.

If general manager Jim Nill is looking for a positive besides the record, the Stars have given up 177 goals, second-fewest in the league to Boston (174).

The Wild had a difficult choice with Evason. He replaced Bruce Boudreau on Feb. 14 and has posted a 12-8 record in his first shot as an NHL coach.

Players, fans get creative to raise funds for minors

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

By the numbers

\$850K

Money Professional Hockey Players Association (PHPA) executive director Larry Landon estimates is needed to cover ECHL players' paychecks for the season's lost three weeks.

\$270K

Monies raised so far from a relief fund set up by the ECHL and PHPA.

SOURCE: Associated Press

More than a month after the ECHL canceled the rest of its season, minor league hockey players are still hoping to get some financial help.

A relief fund set up by the league and Professional Hockey Players Association has raised \$270,000 so far, about a third of the total goal. PHPA executive director Larry Landon estimates \$850,000 is needed to cover paychecks from three lost weeks of the season. He hopes money can be sent to players beginning next week.

"We've got to get it out to the players that truly do need it as fast as we can," Landon said. "It'll be a huge undertaking to get there."

With a shortfall and concerns growing about starting next season, players, fans and teams are starting to get creative. One fan has raised \$7,000 by auctioning off memorabilia, and South Carolina goaltender Parker Milner said he hopes a quarantine concert brings awareness to the situation and some extra funds.

Longtime Toledo Walleye fan Dennis Seymour said he hopes to raise a total of \$10,000 for the ECHL-PHPA COVID-19 Relief Fund and already bought a couple of \$5 tickets for the Pregame Skate Quarantine Concert that will be livestreamed Saturday night. The effort is being spearheaded by Milner and Boston College teammate Brian Dumoulin of the Pittsburgh Penguins, with possible appearances from retired goaltender Mike McKenna, Kyle Palmieri of the New Jersey Devils and Kevin Hayes of the Philadelphia Flyers.

While the NHL and other pro

sports leagues are considering returning without fans, that kind of business model doesn't work for minor league hockey. Landon said he's lost sleep worrying.

"If there's no group gatherings, how are we playing?" Landon said.

The immediate concern is trying to pay players for lost wages, but the uncertainty is unsettling among those who make an average of \$700-\$725 a week. Milner hoped the concert is just the start of publicizing what players are up against.

"Hopefully other guys will keep coming up with some stuff, but just finding cool ways to continue to talk about it," Milner said.



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

South Carolina Stingrays goalie Parker Milner, shown at Boston College, hopes a quarantine concert brings awareness to the ECHL players' situation as well as some extra funds.

NFL

Remote draft to have dry run

By BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

The NFL will hold a practice remote draft Monday, three days before the real thing is done in the same way.

Detroit Lions general manager Bob Quinn on Friday did not provide details on the proceedings — except what his team has planned.

“We’re going to have a couple internal tests and trial runs here,” Quinn said in a Zoom meeting to preview the draft. “The league is having a mock draft, mock trial run on Monday that we’ll participate in.”

Commissioner Roger Goodell ordered all team facilities closed in March, and later required club personnel to conduct the draft from their homes. Because of the reliance on free-flowing communication, the league decided to stage a mock draft to ensure all goes smoothly next Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The draft originally was scheduled for Las Vegas, but the NFL canceled all public events last month as a safeguard against the coronavirus. On April 6, Goodell instructed teams on how they should plan to make selections.

“After consulting with medical advisers, we cannot identify an alternative that is preferable from a medical or public health perspective, given the varying needs of clubs, the need properly to screen participants, and the unique risk factors that individual club employees may face,” he wrote.

Among the technologies needed for the actual draft are team web meetings and a web hookup with the league itself. There also will be phone lines for communicating with other teams for trades, which must be approved by the NFL’s central office.

“I’m at my house. I have a home office that I use occasionally during the season and occasionally during the offseason — not very much,” Quinn said. “But I’m staring at a TV to my right. I have three monitors to my left. I have

two laptops. I have a huge what we would call our ‘draft phone,’ I have my home phone. I have two cell phones, and I have a printer. So that’s kind of my setup that I’m looking at right now.

“We can’t obviously replicate our draft board in my office here, so all the draft boards, needs boards, all of those things will be emailed, printed, they’ll probably be screen-shared on some platform that we’re still evaluating ... to use next week. Then we’ll have redundancies on everything.”

‘We’re going to do a couple internal tests and trial runs here.’

Bob Quinn
Lions GM

house and a security guy there just in case people don’t like your picks, they’re not knocking on your door or ringing the doorbell,” said Brett Veach, general manager of the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs.

One logistical concern involves the flow of information and ability to communicate when teams are on the clock. There could be complications if a team has settled on a player and is about to make a selection to end a round.

“I think the scenario that we’re all kind of playing through our mind is when you’re on the clock and you’re about to turn a card in,” Veach said. “And then with 45 seconds left, a team comes in and presents a really interesting trade. When you’re in the office, you can look to a guy (and quickly discuss the offer).”

“Just making sure that we don’t have a slow connection at 45 seconds. So, that’s a little bit of a concern, just that last-minute trade that you get the phone call on the clock.”



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Kevin Colbert of the Pittsburgh Steelers and other general managers are doing tests to prepare for the remote draft.



DAVID PETWIEWICZ, CLEVELAND.COM/AP

Ohio State defensive end Chase Young, considered the likely No. 1 pick. This year’s NFL draft, held remotely, may mean teams will be less likely to trade draft choices, general managers say.

GMs: league’s remote draft may change trade dynamics

By TOM CANAVAN
Associated Press

To trade or not to trade? An especially difficult question in this year’s NFL Draft?

The coronavirus pandemic has forced the NFL to conduct its annual draft remotely, which might reduce the number of times Commissioner Roger Goodell or anyone else announces a trade.

General managers around the league said this week the remote nature of the draft will change the way teams move up and down in the order next Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Spur of the moment deals might be difficult to engineer with team officials at their homes and not in “war rooms” in their headquarters. It will be nearly impossible to look around the room for a quick consensus.

And if a communications connection is lost — IT guys have been working countless hours to make sure that does not happen — or a phone goes dead, what happens?

The more likely scenarios for trades are ones that are premeditated. Take for example, the Detroit Lions and New York Giants, who hold the third and fourth picks overall, respectively.

Both teams have been listening to offers this week, Lions GM Bob Quinn and Giants counterpart Dave Gettleman have said.

“It’s something I would very seriously entertain,” said Gettleman, whose team is in position to take a much-needed offensive tackle.

The Lions are listening, too. There has been talk of the Dolphins and jumping up to No. 3 to grab a quarterback — or whatever.

“I think just the way the world we’re living in, with this being virtual, I think a lot of those things, if I’m going to do something, I think we’re going to have a pretty good idea Thursday afternoon of where we stand,” Quinn said. “I don’t think I’m going to be making a huge decision on trading the No. 3 overall pick while I’m on the clock, while I’m virtually talking to our head coach and our other personnel.”

Gettleman said the trade squeeze would be felt most after the second round. The first round is 10 minutes in length. The second is seven. Rounds 3-6 will fall to five minutes a pick. It drops to four minutes in the seventh and final round.

“It’s going to be tight to try to do that, to try to trade back or trade up,” Gettleman said of the final five rounds. “I think what’s going to happen, what

this is going to force everybody to do, is do deals before their pick is up. So, let’s say ... one team calls another team and says, ‘I want to trade up.’ They’ll make a deal off the clock, and then if the guy is there for the team that wants to move up, then they’ll consummate the trade. I think a lot of it is going to be done ahead of time.”



Roseman

Philadelphia Eagles personnel director Howie Roseman said talks between teams have been no different this week than previous years.

“We all have each other’s phone numbers and we all have multiple phone lines,” Roseman said. “I think there will be the same level of communication because that doesn’t change.”

If he wants to talk to Chiefs GM Brett Veach, he’s just a call or text away.

Veach is in a new spot for this draft: The Super Bowl champions are bringing up the rear of the opening round.

“One thing that I think every team is most concerned about is just the flow and the effectiveness of communication. If you’re on the clock and you’re working through your scenarios, then you finally come up with, ‘OK, we like this guy,’” Veach said. “Or we don’t like any of these trades. Or, we like this trade, and we want to do this trade ... I think the scenario that we’re all kind of playing through our mind is when you’re on the clock and you’re about to turn a card in, and then with 45 seconds left, a team comes in and presents a really interesting trade.”

The NFL will conduct a mock draft on Monday to test whether teams can navigate those late-minute scenarios.

What seems certain is LSU quarterback Joe Burrow going No. 1 overall to Cincinnati, then Ohio State edge rusher Chase Young taken next by Washington. After that, how many times will Goodell announce a trade from home? Will fewer deals happen because of this year’s draft dynamics?

No doubt, phones will be ringing for three days next week.

“If someone calls you up and their chart doesn’t match yours and they make an offer and you don’t think it’s a good deal, you don’t do it,” Gettleman said. “It’s that simple. If both groups are motivated, you’ll come to some kind of conclusion.”

NFL DRAFT



BUTCH DILL/AP

Lenoir Rhyne's Kyle Dugger, left, intercepts a pass intended for Vanderbilt's Jared Pinkney during practice for the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., in January. Dugger made Hickory, N.C., a must stop for NFL scouts last fall.

Deeper: Scouts don't sleep on prospects

FROM BACK PAGE

"It hasn't been the easiest switch going from not having any of the (publicity) to having a lot of it," Dugger said during the league's annual scouting combine in Indianapolis. "But (they school officials) definitely got behind me and they're really excited."

Not so long ago, scouts didn't know much about Dugger, either. He remembers repeatedly answering three questions: What school is that, where is it located, and how did he end up in Division II?

Then again, it's easy for football players to get overlooked in Hickory, a small city full of Southern charm nestled between Interstate 40 and the Blue Ridge Parkway. There, fans flock to feature races under the

'The competitor in me definitely wanted more, at times.'

Kyle Dugger
Lenoir-Rhyne CB

games. The nearby mountains offer plenty of outdoors options.

So Lenoir-Rhyne football hasn't always been the top choice for Saturday afternoons.

But when Dugger started turning heads, thousands showed up at 8,500-seat Moretz Stadium to see the budding star. Scouts followed, and soon Dugger was the feature attraction.

"The competitor in me definitely wanted more, at times," he said. "I'd really dive into the details of what I was doing and see if I'm doing what I'm supposed to do — or was it me getting away with things because of the level of the competition."

NFL executives knew better than to overlook another player from a school that barely registers on college football's high-light shows.

The roll call includes Walter Payton of Jackson State, Jerry Rice of Mississippi Valley State and Carson Wentz of North Dakota State. Joe Flacco and Darrell Green came out of Delaware and Texas A&M-Kingsville, respectively.

Dugger finds himself at the head of another strong class that includes offensive

linebacker Ben Bartch of St. Johns (Minnesota), running back James Robinson of Illinois State, tight ends Charlie Tauempeau of Portland State and Adam Trautman of Dayton.

Three of the four, in addition to Dugger, were at the Senior Bowl. All five received combine invites, and most understand the club they're trying to join.

Bartch's story starts like so many others. He was a high school tight end with no Division I offers, opting to play at a Division III school primarily because he liked the area, loved the sport, and the school gave him a chance to extend his career.

Two years later, the coaches asked him to move to left tackle.

Then came the big twist. Bartch spent the next three months cramming in study sessions between classwork, conditioning and coaching at a local high school. Sometimes, he relied on YouTube videos to learn the position.

To save time, Bartch devised his own breakfast smoothie creation. He describes the "magic shake" as a concoction of seven eggs, a large tub of cottage cheese, quick grits, peanut butter and a banana, topped off with a splash of Gatorade. It helped him go from 250 pounds to 305 as he turned into an NFL prospect.

"I would throw it all in and plug my nose," Bartch said. "I'd gag sometimes, but that's what you have to do."

Now Bartch should become the first St. John's player taken since 1974. (DT Kurt Wachtler to the Vikings in the 15th round). Bartch would be the highest draft pick in school history.

Dugger doesn't have to go back that far to find Lenoir-Rhyne's last selection: DE John Miley, chosen by San Francisco in Round 5 in 2000.

But after an impressive Senior Bowl, the kid who started high school at 5-foot-6, 140 pounds and graduated at 5-11, 170 with only three scholarship offers, showed up in Indy at 6-1, 217 pounds, with the long arms teams crave. He ran the 40 in 4.49 seconds, had the best vertical jump among safeties (42 inches) and the second best broad jump (11 feet, 2 inches).

And if he becomes the highest Division II player selected since the turn of the century, he'll be on a stage where everyone knows his name, school and story.

"It's something I will use as a stepping stone," he said. "But I kind of like being in the underdog role, kind of that dark side, villainous role, and I think it's something I'm going to continue doing."

Remote draft a new challenge for networks

By JOE REEDY
Associated Press

The NFL Draft is annually one of the most ambitious productions that ESPN does. This week's coverage might go down as THE most ambitious in the network's 40-year history.

With the NFL closing team complexes and canceling plans to hold the draft in Las Vegas, this year's event is shaping up as a logistical challenge. ESPN Vice President of Production Steve Markham says there are usually 10 remote locations during the first round. On Thursday night, there might be as many as 180.

"Safe to say, we have never had a year like this. It's a great opportunity to bring fans hope and joy and an escape from what we are experiencing," Markham said. "We do enjoy challenges. We will make it happen, but it is damn complicated."

ESPN and NFL Network will air a combined broadcast all three days. It will now originate from ESPN's headquarters in Bristol, Conn., but most of the reporters and analysts will be at their homes.

Mark Quenzel, NFL Network's Senior Vice President of Programming and Production, said the two networks had been in discussions about a joint production once it appeared that the draft wouldn't take place in Las Vegas.

With everyone spread out, the biggest challenge will be making sure there aren't any technical difficulties. Reporters have been able to get on air from home for nearly a month while draft prospects, coaches and general managers received kits from the league.

Quenzel said the league has set up three call centers to handle the various needs — one for the prospects, one for coaches and team executives and another for fans. The league has also reached out to various wireless providers to make sure there is extra bandwidth over the three days so that the grid isn't overloaded.

Because fans are a unique part of the draft experience, ESPN has reached out via social media to get fan videos previewing the draft. There's no word yet though whether fans booing commissioner Roger Goodell before each pick will be piped in to make it feel like a authentic draft.

Goodell will introduce first-round picks from his home in Bronxville, N.Y.

"We're trying to streamline the feeds along with having as many backups as we can," Quenzel said. "The execution of the draft, as far as what we can show with the teams, will be the same. Everyone has the same technology and availability."

Markham said there are normally 15 in the control room at one time during the draft, but it will be limited to seven. They will also use two control rooms so that everyone has their own area and adheres to social distancing guidelines.

Those in the control room will also wear masks, which could be an extra challenge for producers and directors trying to communicate.

ESPN's Trey Wingo and Suzy Kolber will be the only ones in the studio for the ESPN-NFL Network telecast. Wingo will be anchoring his fourth draft and Kolber will be conducting interviews with draftees. Mel Kiper Jr. — who will be with ESPN for his 37th draft — Louis Riddick and Booger McFarland will be providing analysis from their homes.

ESPN also has nine reporters monitoring teams throughout the three days, including Adam Schefter and Chris Mortenson.

NFL Network's crew includes host Rich Eisen, who has been a part of all 17 drafts the network has done, along with analysts Daniel Jeremiah, Michael Irvin and Kurt Warner.

ABC will air a separate draft broadcast on Thursday and Friday for the second straight year before simulcasting the ESPN-NFL Network feed on Saturday.

The ABC telecasts will again be more feature based and focus on prospects' road to the draft, along with the roles their families have played. Rece Davis, Jesse Palmer and Maria Taylor will host the coverage from Bristol, with analysis from Todd McShay, Kirk Herbstreit, Desmond Howard and David Pollack. Tom Rinaldi will provide most of the pre-taped features.

"We were set up for a big ratings year because of the quality of this year's class, but now we are waiting and seeing," Markham said. "We don't have the competition that we normally have (with the NBA and NHL playoffs). Whether that means more eyeballs and anticipation, I don't know."



STEVE HELBER/AP

Roger Goodell will introduce first-round picks from his home in Bronxville, N.Y., this year, so fans won't have the chance to boo the commissioner before each pick.

SPORTS



Everything on hold
Season's suspension put Devils' interim GM in tough spot » **Page 21**

NFL DRAFT

Digging deeper

Division II standout Dugger leads another strong class of small-school prospects

BY MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS

Kyle Dugger played most of his college football career in the shadows of higher-profile players and programs.

Appalachian State was less than a two-hour drive north of the Lenoir-Rhyne campus. The Tobacco Road triad of Duke, North Carolina and North Carolina State was about two hours east, and Knoxville, home of the Tennessee Volunteers, was less than three hours to the west.

Dugger isn't taking a back seat to any of them.

Last fall, he forced NFL scouts to add a new stop on their weekend trips, Hickory, N.C., where they unearthed a hidden gem — maybe the best draft prospect football fans don't know.

SEE DEEPER ON PAGE 23

NOT TO BE OVERLOOKED

NFL executives know better than to ignore players from schools that barely register on college football's highlight shows. The roll call of small-school standouts to make it big in the NFL includes Walter Payton of Jackson State, Jerry Rice of Mississippi Valley State and Carson Wentz of North Dakota State. Joe Flacco and Darrell Green came out of Delaware and Texas A&M-Kingsville, respectively.

SOURCE: Associated Press

After following up an impressive showing for the South at the Senior Bowl in January with some eye-opening numbers at the NFL Combine in March, Lenoir-Rhyne safety Kyle Dugger could be the highest-selected Division II player since the turn of the century.

Butch Dill/AP

TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

